

**The Effects of Interaction on the Writing of  
English Composition:  
An exploratory study in secondary schools in  
Tanzania**

**by  
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## ABSTRACT

This study, based on classroom observation of ESL students, is an attempt to explore the effects of prior interactions on the learners' performance in communicative writing tasks. The study seeks to ascertain how classroom discourse generated by students as they interact prior to writing is shaped by the tasks and how it subsequently contributes to the quality of the written compositions. The basic hypotheses projected for the study were that different tasks would generate different quantities and qualities of interaction patterns which would correspondingly affect the written compositions.

The nature of the tasks was seen as being instrumental in determining the variety of words rather than the amount of words used and that determined the quality of the compositions. Similarly, the generation of complex syntactic and cohesion features by the subjects was closely associated with the opportunity they were afforded by the tasks to interact. Narrative composition tasks in which there was substantial interactions were more likely to generate these language features than were the descriptive composition tasks in which there were restricted patterns of interaction. The study reveals, however, that the interaction patterns arising from the oral language gave rise to language features which got incorporated into the written compositions but did not conform with the conventions of the written language. Moreover, the discourse acts employed did not invariably bring about a coherent semantic relationship among propositions because of the subjects' low language proficiency and their inability to appropriately employ cohesion features associated with the expression of propositions.

A survey among subjects of the study shows that collaborative learning in pairs or groups is regarded as being more favourable to promoting features of language that lead to good quality compositions than a teacher-fronted approach, although input from the latter is seen as a prerequisite for the smooth running of pair work and group work. However, there is a general consensus that group work is a better method of learning than pair work, apparently because group work, offers opportunity for more substantial interactions than pairwork which often culminates in interlocutors being unable to sustain a conversation in English.

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## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE STUDY

The following are the salient abbreviations used in this study:

FL	Foreign Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
NS/NNS	Native Speaker/ Non-native Speaker
NSs/NNs	Native Speakers/Non-native Speakers
L1/ L2	First Language/ Second Language
HPs/ LPs	High Performers / Low Performers
M	Mean (Average)
SD	Standard Deviation
PW	Pair work
GW	Group work
TF/ Teach. front	Teacher fronted lesson or activity
LOB	The Lancaster-Oslo-Bergen Corpus
Tok.	Token (Word).
Word freq/ Lob freq.	Word frequency/ Lob frequency
descr.	Descriptive Composition
Narr.	Narrative Composition
Tot.	Totat
C/I; Corr./Inc.	Correct/Incorrect

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY: TANZANIA'S LANGUAGE POLICY AND THE LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LANGUAGE LEARNING SITUATION**

The education provided must therefore encourage the development in each citizen of three things; an enquiring mind; an ability to learn from what others do, and reject or adapt it to his own needs; and a basic confidence in his own position as a free and equal member of the society. (Julius Nyerere, 1968:274)

Only dialogue, which requires critical thinking is capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education. (Paulo Freire 1972:65)

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Ever since 1967, there has been a relatively increased focus on the development of education in Tanzania. This attention has ostensibly, not been without reason. In 1967 Tanzania promulgated the Arusha Declaration, a blueprint for the transformation of Tanzania into a socialist society. One of the measures for the implementation of the ethos enshrined in the socialist doctrine was Education for Self reliance, an educational policy conceived of by Julius Nyerere, the former President of the United Republic of Tanzania. This was a radical programme for transforming the erstwhile educational system inherited from Britain during colonial rule into an educational system that would be geared towards creating a democratic and egalitarian society. Since education plays a crucial role as an instrument for modernizing a society, it was not unexpected that the former President had to direct his initial attacks against a system that churned out elites who were invariably at odds with the country's national aspirations if the Arusha Declaration was to succeed.

One of the ideals of Education for Self Reliance which was expected to have widespread political, pedagogical and administrative ramifications in the country, was the call for bringing up pupils who would no longer simply blindly accept what they were told but would be able to democratically participate in decision making that affected their lives in school, and subsequently, later in their lives. This did not mean that pupils were going to

usurp the teachers' authority but it simply meant that politically and ideologically, schools were now among the agents of enhancing the democratic ethos enshrined in the Arusha Declaration.

On the other hand, the pedagogical implications of this were that the Ministry of Education and curriculum developers had to direct their attention to devising a curriculum that would serve the needs of students who would be imbued with a critical and "enquiring mind". The administrative aspect of these measures meant that student-teacher relations had to be reviewed to suit new conditions. This entailed not only creating new democratic roles for students but also creating student organizations that would facilitate the furthering of the democratic process envisaged. However, what often happened was that many facets of the teachers' authority were left intact and most of the attention was paid to the reorganization of students in decision making matters, particularly Self-reliance projects done before or after classroom studies. The democratic process did not permeate the classroom and teacher-student relations in the classroom have remained too sacrosanct to be encroached upon even by the Education for Self reliance policy. I deem teacher-student relations an important aspect of any implementation of policy, for whether we regard a language policy as an aid or impediment to learning, the social relations in the school in general and in the classroom in particular, will determine how learning is fostered or constrained. Whether we are simply "transmitting" the knowledge to a passive learner or giving him an opportunity to "interpret" it (Barnes 1976) will substantially determine the course of learning. As Cook-Gumperz (1986) puts it:

Learning is not just a matter of cognitive processing in which individuals receive, store and use certain kinds of instructional messages which are organized into a curriculum. Literacy learning takes place in a social environment through interactional exchanges in which what is to be learnt is to some extent a joint construction of teacher and student (p.8)

Language is a vehicle through which interactional exchanges take place. These interactional exchanges occurring within the school or outside the school, are geared towards the realization of educational goals which are themselves subsumed under the national goals since schools are agents for the transmission of society's values and culture. It is, therefore, not without reason that the choice of a national language or official language becomes a topical issue in any country's policy making objectives.

## **1.2 Education for Self-Reliance and Kiswahili as a medium of instruction**

The introduction of Kiswahili as an official language and a medium of instruction in primary schools in 1968 can be seen as one of the measures which helped to promote the ideals of the Arusha Declaration and Education for Self Reliance, and was a reflection of Tanzania's national consciousness and national identity. Language is a symbol of unity and facilitates the mobilization of people for the attainment of national objectives.

One of the objectives of the egalitarian ethos of Education for Self Reliance was the provision of education for all school-going age children and for adults who had not had access to education during their youth. Kiswahili, as a language spoken by almost every Tanzanian, was thus an appropriate medium for imparting education to a majority of Tanzanians and for imparting to them Tanzania's ideology and cultural values. The introduction of Kiswahili as a national language has been a remarkable feat in a continent (Africa) which is so beleaguered with problems of choosing a national language because of a multiplicity of local languages that some countries have resorted to using the language of their former colonial rulers.

However ideologically sound the introduction of Kiswahili was, it has had some impact on classroom communication in secondary schools where, paradoxically, English continues to be the medium of instruction. For the few Tanzanian primary school pupils who manage to get places in secondary schools, the rapid switch to English as a medium of teaching in all subjects except *Siasa* (Political Education), has meant that their ability to interact with teachers is very much curtailed as they lack competence in the English language. This consequently means that their ability to use English for developing an independent and critically inquiring mind as envisaged by the Education for Self-Reliance policy, is constrained. It is therefore, doubtful if primary and secondary school pupils are able to learn their subjects in English with a critical and enquiring mind unless they resort in one way or another to Kiswahili. The inability of students to communicate well in English in other subjects in secondary schools, and the inability of both students and teachers to communicate in English in primary schools, have educational implications which cannot be ignored.

It has been frequently mentioned in the Tanzanian public media and in some academic circles that, a switch to Kiswahili may have contributed to a fall in the

standards of education although there have been so far no empirical evidence to substantiate this (Rubagumya 1986; Yahya-Othman 1990). However, following the Cripser and Dodd Report (1984) on the teaching of English, some people are beginning to wonder whether it is inaccurate to relate falls in educational standards which are still assessed in terms of how well people do in examinations in secondary schools, (although at the primary level a pupil might be judged by his ability to read "Uhuru"- the country's Kiswahili newspaper- and to write and read a letter) to the use of Kiswahili as a teaching medium in primary schools. Furthermore, the fact that it is now Ministry of Education policy that students in secondary schools should speak English in schools (albeit without the meting out of punishment to those who don't as was the case before 1968), leads one to conclude that the Ministry's fear is that less exposure to English because of the predominance of Kiswahili in social interactions, has adversely affected students' mastery of English.

The fact that learners are constrained to answer or ask questions in English in class supposedly because of little exposure to English, means that teachers can hardly communicate with their pupils unless they do so in Kiswahili or resort to mere copying of notes on the blackboard for pupils (Cripser and Dodd 1984). This would affect the decisions teachers make as regards which methodology they should adopt to get their instructions across to their students. Secondly, the ease or difficulty in choosing a methodology considered appropriate is indirectly affected by the training these teachers have had before coming to these schools; unless one assumes that they are innovative enough to devise new methods for the prevailing circumstances. Thirdly, the problem in communicating with students or in having students communicate among themselves, means that there might be a need - if the economy gives scope for this- to reconsider the types of teaching and learning materials used by the teacher and learners. Language policy and the way teachers and students interact to construct knowledge in the classroom, are therefore, inextricably intertwined. I will now turn my attention to the place of English in Tanzania before and after independence before considering the teacher and student roles in Tanzania's learning context, because I regard the position occupied by the target language as being important in ascertaining how communication in that language is to be sustained.



### **1.3 Tanzania's language policy and the use of English as a medium of instruction in Secondary Schools**

#### **1.3.1 English before and after independence**

Tanzania was a German colony until 1919 after the Treaty of Versailles when it was handed over to Britain under the United Nations Trusteeship Council. As was the case in all British dependencies, English was the official and commercial language. However, like the Germans, the British did not, ironically, stifle the use of and the teaching of Kiswahili. This move was not without reason. Both the German and the British colonialists regarded Kiswahili as a crucial vehicle for communicating with the people under their control. Whiteley (1969:6) notes that Kiswahili was a means of reaching down to the people rather than of enabling them to reach up to the administration". With the indirect system of rule manipulated by the British through local chiefs, it was thought worth encouraging the promotion of a language which the local people spoke.

The rise of nationalism in Africa and subsequent independence, made many African countries seek in the promotion of their own indigenous languages, a sense of national identity. Tanzania already had Kiswahili as a common language. What remained was to make it a national language following the birth of the independent nation. Moreover, as was the case with many other African countries, only the African elite was well versed in English. Education had, therefore, to be offered in the language the people could understand. In Tanzania, just after independence in 1961, both Kiswahili and English continued to be used in government offices, commercial correspondence and in all schools as a medium of instruction from Standard V. The first serious attempt to promote the use of Kiswahili strongly was in 1964 when the Second Vice-President sent a circular to all civil servants urging them to stop mixing Kiswahili and English in their official correspondence. As a sequel to this, the Institute of Kiswahili Research was established in 1967 to encourage the use of Kiswahili "in the conduct of official business and public life generally" (Whiteley 196:112). All these were attempts to reaffirm the country's determination to make Kiswahili a truly national and official language though English continued to be used as a medium of instruction in schools.

### **1.3.2 English as a medium of instruction and attitudes towards the teaching and learning of English**

In 1968 English ceased to be a medium of instruction in primary schools and was replaced by Kiswahili. However, English continued to be a medium of instruction in secondary schools and higher institutions of learning. An attempt to make Kiswahili a medium of instruction for higher learning as early as the 1970s (Mbunda, Brumfit, Constable and Hill, 1980) was made in 1972 following a conference held in the Tanzanian town of Dodoma by heads of the ruling party (then TANU), the Government and the University of Dar es Salaam. The implementation of this measure, though vigorously pursued, has not been without its attendant problems, the most salient of which have been the relative status of English as a "world" language and the economic problems facing the country; factors which make Tanzania find it difficult to articulate a clear and unambiguous policy despite her avowal to make Kiswahili permeate all aspects of life.

A number of studies conducted in Tanzania have found that despite their poor performance in English and other subjects taught in English, Tanzanian secondary students interviewed still prefer English to Kiswahili as a medium of instruction so as to pursue higher education and get jobs (Mohammed 1975; Mvungi 1981; Rubagumya 1986; 1990; and Yahya- Othman 1990). The reasons for the preference of English becomes clear when it is realized that the majority of those preferring to study in English in such studies were from urban areas rather than rural areas (Rubagumya 1986 and Batibo 1990) where students had more exposure to films, advertisements and newspapers which are written in English and where the urge to get professional jobs becomes more acute than in rural areas. Rubagumya (1989) argues that the problem of learning English cannot in any way, be related to a negative attitude towards English language because learners in urban areas want to learn English after all. The findings are similar to a great extent to those of Batibo (1990) who found that primary school pupils in Dar es Salaam placed English second in relation to other subjects, whereas rural primary school students who constitute a majority of primary school students, placed English in fifth position. It would be interesting to find out what rural secondary school students, who are ostensibly, more sophisticated in their outlook on life than their primary school counterparts, would say, though my belief is that their views would be similar to those of primary schools in urban areas since secondary schools in both urban and rural areas learn in English and already know the advantages of using the

language. Some students in urban areas have parents who speak English at home and some urban students attend the few International Schools where English is the teaching medium and would tend to like English and probably influence their friends who may be attending other kinds of schools.

Rubagumya (1986) writes that a language is said to be enjoying "absolute prestige" if it permeates almost all aspects of life but that if the language ceases to have practical utility it only assumes "relative prestige". It is obvious that in Tanzania, English now enjoys only a relative prestige since it virtually remains the language of academic instruction and is used only by the elite. However, what the studies on pupils' attitudes reveal generally, is that students see English as a platform for their future success in life. As Rubagumya (1990:112-113) notes:

they see English as a status symbol and would like to identify themselves with those capable of using it (absolute prestige) but when it comes to communicative competence, they admit that Kiswahili satisfies their needs more than English does (relative prestige).

The "status symbol" issues thus tends to overshadow even the financial problems involved in translating Kiswahili books into English for use in secondary schools, as an impediment to the rapid introduction of Kiswahili as a teaching medium in secondary schools. One has to sympathize with the economic problems which have forced some Third World countries to abandon some of their projects and apparently, Tanzania's economic problems and the "status symbol" problem have militated against the introduction of Kiswahili in subjects currently being taught in English. Indeed, the recommendations of the Presidential Commission on Education (1982) show a reversal, however temporary, of the language medium policy as the recommendations have among them, a proviso that : "English will be the medium of instruction at post primary levels where the teaching of Kiswahili as a subject will also be strengthened" (p.21). It is conceivable that given a choice between printing Chemistry books in Kiswahili and buying medicine for its rural dispensaries, Tanzania's choice would be the latter. Although the translation of books has been admirably done at the primary school level, it still remains a problem at the secondary level because at this level, not only are funds required to print books, but an adequate knowledge of the scientific or medical content is required before one can properly translate the material into the local language. Hence, others like Abdullaziz (1976:41) have argued that because the supremacy of Kiswahili is well recognized, the secondary role and hence,

necessity of English could well be preserved "in areas in which Swahili may not be in a developed enough position to function efficiently".

I would now like to consider the position of English in primary schools where Kiswahili is the teaching medium, since performance in secondary schools is very closely related to performance in primary schools.

### **1.3.2.1 English language teaching in primary schools and attitudes towards the teaching of English**

Despite her avowed aim of providing education to all, Tanzania still finds herself with an intractable problem which results in providing further education to only a selected few. Only a very small number of primary school children are able to get places in secondary schools because the few available places in secondary schools are unable to accommodate the burgeoning number of primary school leavers. In 1989 for example (National Report of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1990), only 57,482 pupils of the 3,252,954 pupils from 10,431 Tanzanian primary schools (i.e only 6.9 per cent) were selected for Form 1 (first year of secondary school) in the 124 public secondary schools (government aided secondary schools). The implications of this as far as language teaching and language learning are concerned, is that, it becomes difficult to make decisions regarding the objectives of teaching English in primary schools in which only a very small number of learners are expected to continue with secondary education. Is English being taught to help the few who will get the chance to go on to secondary education or is it being taught simply so that the egalitarian concept of providing at least primary education to everyone, can be attained? These may not be easy questions since there are those who may argue against teaching English to those who will after all not use the language for any academic, let alone, communicative purpose after primary school. On the other hand, we have pupils who fail to gain places in public secondary schools but can still manage to find places in private schools which follow the same syllabuses as those of the public schools. What I deem to be important is not whether or not English should be taught to primary school learners. It is not easy to tell whether or not the learner will need the English he learns at school and after all if we are to abide by the egalitarian ethos, the best option would be to offer English to all, although probably not until Standard Five when at least the learner has managed to understand Kiswahili well and is ready to switch to another language.

The problems of teaching English have been given wide coverage in studies carried out to investigate the issue. In their report on the teaching of English in Tanzanian educational institutions, Criper and Dodd (1984) note that 68 per cent of Standard Seven (final year of primary school) pupils are "unable to read and understand any connected text" (p.14). They also have this to say about the linguistic input which learners get from their teachers and which everybody would regard as vital for the first year of secondary education:

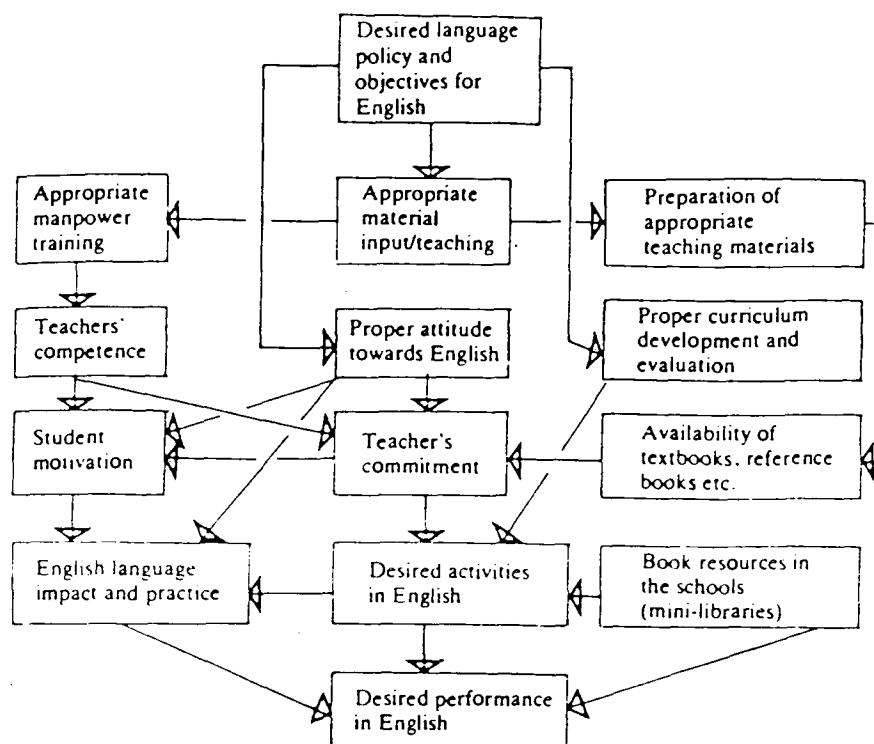
All instruction in class is given in Kiswahili except for the six English lessons per week. English is not used in or around school for any activity. A pupil can therefore only learn through the English he receives orally or from the teacher's writing on the blackboard. The model the teacher is giving is often wrong in pronunciation, spelling and in grammar. It is the teacher's English which provides the input for all the child's learning. If both the teacher's English and the teacher's methodology remain weak, if there exist no supplementary materials, and if there are no opportunities to use the language for any meaningful activity, then any extra hours devoted to English are unlikely to improve the pupils' level of English (p.20).

What is important from this observation is that the teacher's oral language provides the basis for the primary school learner's English. How this oral language is presented and the social context in which it is presented, becomes very important especially because of the lack of competence on both the teachers and the pupils. It is perhaps, unfortunate that almost all studies on language teaching and language learning in Tanzania have tended to focus on teachers' and students' attitudes towards the use of English as a medium of instruction and on the impact of Kiswahili as a teaching medium in primary schools rather than on what goes on in classrooms where very little communication takes place through English. Lack of competence on the part of the students is likely to affect the communication patterns in the classroom as what the teacher says does not get through to the student. On the other hand, lack of competence on the part of the teacher is likely to make the teacher avoid or refrain from talking and rely substantially on his textbooks. Consequently, he will fail to promote communication in the classroom and will end up telling his pupils to copy from the blackboard. The outcome of this is that the pupils will fail to understand what they are copying out and subsequently they will not be unmotivated to learn the language and may show negative attitudes towards learning the language.

Webster's Third New International Dictionary (1961 edition) offers this as one of its definitions of attitude: "a disposition that is primarily grounded in affect and

emotion and is expressive of opinions rather than beliefs" (p.141) and Gardner (1985) regards an attitude as "an evaluative reaction to some referent or attitude object, inferred on the basis of the individual's beliefs or opinions about the referent" (p.9) I regard these definitions as concurring on the basis of regarding attitudes not as established norms but as individuals possessions or idiosyncracies. Attitudes can, however, be pervasive and be the accepted feelings of the community, although the extent to which each individual will direct his feeling towards something may differ from another. Gardner (1985) is mainly interested in people's attitude to a second language and so I cite him so that I can attempt to show how his views could have some relevance to the Tanzanian situation. Gardner conceives of "educational attitudes" and "social attitudes" towards a language, the latter being relevant to attitudes towards learning a foreign language and the former being somewhat akin to an individual's xenophilia or xenophobia towards the community that speaks the language he is learning. I would be inclined to believe that the tendency is more for people to express their attitude towards a language rather than a language community at least as far as language learning is concerned. A negative feeling towards an English speaking community would probably have been felt in Tanzania twenty five years ago, but judging from views expressed towards English learning and the level of education attained by Tanzanians, one can only say that the current concern seems to be about the role of Kiswahili and English in the educational system. I am mentioning about attitudes because one important idea which Gardner (1985) posits is that to have a positive attitude towards a language, as is increasingly becoming clear as regards English in Tanzania - despite lack of communicative competence in it- is not enough. Gardner argues that one must supplement his positive attitude by an effort to learn the language. It would appear that many primary school and secondary school pupils want to learn English but they are simply prevented from learning effectively by many problems some of which I have highlighted. Batibo (1990) comprehensively tries to show how teacher's motivation and students' competence are closely interrelated (see Figure 1. 1 below). The training teachers get from Teachers Colleges is very much likely to affect the way they teach. If the training is textbook oriented, the teacher will consider the effectiveness of his lesson in terms of the availability of books and the lack of textbooks will therefore, very much affect his motivation to teach.

Behaviour in the classroom will be dictated very much by the mood that prevails in a teacher centred, textbook oriented curriculum. I shall dwell on the teacher's authority in the classroom later after explaining briefly about the language



**Figure 1.1 Relationship between policy and performance in language (English). (from Batibo 1990: 73)**

teaching situation in Tanzania. Although the study focused on the language teaching situation in Tanzanian secondary schools, I will dwell on the primary school very briefly because what happens in Tanzanian secondary schools is very much a reflection of what happens in primary schools, at least during the first years of secondary education.

### **1.3.2.2 Learners' attitude towards English and the teaching and learning situation in secondary schools**

As pointed out earlier, it appears that learners in secondary schools generally have a favourable attitude towards English because of the benefits they see stemming from learning English. These benefits range from the procurement of jobs to the pursuing of higher education by those who do well in secondary school subjects which are still taught in English. However, this positive attitude is not matched by corresponding positive results in either success in English at school or in the learners' ability to use English for communicative purposes. Secondary schools are usually staffed by better qualified teachers than those found in primary schools. Teachers in secondary schools are either university graduates or diploma holders (those who go to Teachers Colleges after completing "A" level courses). The fact that they are given the task of teaching those who have finished primary school, means that they have a great task of improving the English of primary school leavers most of whom can hardly utter an English sentence, although those selected for secondary school will usually be those who performed well in primary school. It is unfortunate that the performance of these students at secondary school still leaves much to be desired. The seriousness of this is underscored by Criper and Dodd (1984:14) who state that by the second term of Form 1

nearly a quarter of all pupils are not yet reading any connected texts while 60% are still at a level where they could read only 500 word picture books. There is no way such pupils could follow instructions in other subjects

If poor performance results despite there being well qualified teachers, then some other reasons, apart from the well known problem of lack of teaching material, must be sought. One of the problems has been the quality of teaching which gives pupils very little chance to practise oral language and which is virtually mechanical as teachers resort mostly to writing. Again it might be worth citing what Criper and Dodd observed in some secondary schools.



As in Primary, teaching is often mechanical. Teachers frequently talk about grammar and get pupils to do mechanical exercises on it but our observations did not show many examples in which they had to use language actively to express real meaning either orally or in writing. Oral language was lacking throughout and what there was emphasized reading aloud skills and answers from the better pupils to direct questions from the teacher. Weaker students never volunteer answers and therefore escape most oral work (p.28)

I will be commenting on the teaching situation in secondary schools in connection with the syllabus later, but for the time being let me turn my attention to an aspect of social relations in schools since this could be very relevant to the lack of oral interactions noted by Criper and Dodd (1984) in Tanzanian secondary schools.

#### **1.4 Social relations and learning**

##### **1.4.1 Teacher-student relationship**

A number of studies carried out to explore teacher-pupil relationship do point to the fact that the behaviour of the teacher as well as that of the pupils is crucial in determining the type of learning that is likely to ensue (Evertson et al 1980; Hoge and Luce 1979) and the subsequent success or failure that is likely to accompany learning. Some of these studies have looked for example, into how the nature of classroom questions may aid or impede learning (French and MacLure 1983), while others have looked at how patterns of interaction at school which are different from those that children of ethnic groups experience at home, may lead to children behaving differently from others, being misunderstood by their teachers as reluctant to participate in learning (Philips 1972; Dunkin and Doneau 1982) and consequently ending up as failures at school. Similarly, other studies have looked into the aspect of teacher expectations of their pupils. Delefos and Jackson (1972) and Hughes (1973), for example, examined patterns of interactions in the classroom in which there were high achievers and low achievers, and conclude that the teachers' interactions were allocated on the basis of how the teachers expected the pupils to perform with the low achievers getting fewer interactions than their high achieving counterparts. Studies also abound on the positive and negative consequences of the teacher's feedback (Christensen 1960; Perkins 1965; Hummel- Rossi and Merrifield 1977; Brophy 1979). Perkins, for instance, found that the teachers' criticisms led to underachievers not watching or listening in the classroom and to the subsequent loss in their scores in reading and

spelling. A student who gets low scores may continue performing badly because he perceives that any effort to improve may, after all, not be valued by the teacher. Differential treatment of learners may later lead to differences in performance, with those who feel not valued performing poorly. Galton, Simon and Croll (1980) and Croll (1981) have found that in some British schools, boys receive more attention than girls. The position of the teacher in the classroom is also said to determine the attention the teacher is likely to give to some members of the class with the result that those who are not given attention may perform poorly. Adams and Biddle (1970) and Moore and Smith (1980), for instance, found that the distribution of questions or utterances in the middle, front or centre of the classroom may affect the classroom differentially with a likelihood that questions will tend to be concentrated in the centre and middle of the class ("the action zone") leaving those who are not in those positions at a disadvantage. Since the behaviour of the teacher is very much determined by the authority he has in the teaching-learning process, it is worth exploring the question of the teacher's authority and the impact it may have on learning.

The authority of the teacher and his position in the classroom vis-a-vis that of the learner becomes particularly important in the Tanzanian context where the basic aim of education is said to be to inculcate in the learner, a critical and enquiring mind. A critical and enquiring mind is likely to thrive only when there is an atmosphere permitting the learner to discover for himself; an atmosphere that can flourish only when the classroom is devoid of authoritarianism and where the learning of English does not end up in the learning of rules of grammar which the learner is unlikely to use in later life. Despite almost twenty five years of Education for Self Reliance and much talk about "child centred education" and "discovery learning" in Educational Psychology classes at the University and in Teacher Training Colleges, much of the teacher's authoritarian stance inherited from the German and British colonialists and missionaries is still in place. Cliffe (1973); Hughes (1973); and Mbilinyi (1982) all ruefully state that the educational system does not yet cater for the development of individuals who will have a creative approach to problem solving. Cliffe (1973:220) sees school life in Tanzania as characterized by

strict discipline in the classroom and outside, the preaching of a strict, puritanical moral code, authoritarian pupil-teacher relations, an old fashioned hierarchical, British house/prefect system and too often a reliance on learning by rote.

Mbilinyi (1982) also laments that success still hinges on bookish knowledge and memory testing rather than problem solving. It may not be easy to eradicate memory testing overnight before we know what form of problem solving will replace examinations and be used to assess children's performance. However, I believe it is much easier and less costly to democratize classroom learning by reducing teacher talk and blackboard copying than to plan for a new system that will test the pupils' competence. Only by ensuring that there is a sense of freedom in learning, can we play a part in implementing the self-reliance policy which so far appears to be assessed in terms of what is produced outside the classroom. As Mbilinyi (1982:102) states:

In all public secondary schools students engage in meaningful productive activities. To a varying extent, they participate in decision-making about their own work. However, manual work remains separated from the potentially meaningful 'mental' learning which would have been built into self-reliance activities.

Reliance on textbooks has very much contributed to stifling pupil talk in the classroom. The pupil only talks when told to and the only chance he has is in rarely organized pair work and group work which take place mostly during reading comprehension exercises. The pupil's success is thus measured only by his performance in written examinations. This means that the teacher has to strive to finish the syllabus and prepare his pupils for the written examinations. The inspectors of schools are likewise interested in how much content has been covered as shown in the Teachers' schemes of work which are checked first by the headmasters. The development of "exploratory talk" (Barnes and Todd, 1977) which is essential for discovering meanings and ideas while learning is thus severely curtailed. This is compounded even further by large classes in which many pupils have got to share books, and the lack of teaching materials. Both these problems cannot be solved overnight and hence making them pretexts for failure to attempt to introduce methodologies that will make our pupils learn more meaningfully, will only serve to perpetuate the already existing situation whereby the teacher controls the learning process and the pupil is a mere recipient.

It is now acknowledged that a relaxed atmosphere is a precondition for effective learning. Krashen (1982) basing some of his theories on Dulay and Burt (1977) has propounded a number of concepts which have aroused some controversies. I will be focusing on the input theory, particularly as regards the conditions which Krashen postulates, lead to effective acquisition of input by the learner. However, I will spend sometime on Krashen's concept of learning and

acquisition first. According to Krashen (1982), learning is different from acquisition. Learning takes place consciously and involves the learning of rules such as rules regarding word order or tenses, whereas acquisition is a subconscious process devoid of rule learning and thus taking place in a situation where language is used communicatively. Krashen (1982) argues that in order for acquisition to take place, the learner's input must not only be sufficient but must also be comprehensible. Hence, a learner's exposure to a radio or TV or newspapers has to be such that he encounters broadcasts or information that matches his language ability. What I find pertinent to this study is Krashen's proposition that in order that input is made comprehensible it also has to be offered in an atmosphere that is non-threatening. He calls the 'mental block' that impedes learning "the affective filter", which Dulay and Burt (1977) associate with the needs of the learner and the choices he makes as regards what aspects of language he should learn. According to Krashen (1982) learning is made ideal when the affective filter is low as it impedes acquisition when it is high. As regards what could raise the affective filter, Krashen (1982:99) states thus:

The block, or affective filter, may be caused by any of a variety of factors. It happens when the acquirer is anxious or nervous, when he is over-concerned about his performance in the second language. It happens when he has a negative feeling towards speakers of the language. It can also happen when the acquirer himself lacks self-confidence.

The implications of the above assertion for language teaching in Tanzania are far reaching. The social distance that exists between the teacher and the learner may not dispose well towards effective learning by the learner. I am not implying that the teachers should cultivate intimacy with the learners: That situation may obtain in classrooms but what is implied is the closeness which having instructions imparted to the learner in a two way traffic results in ways of working that could still involve the silent student in the learning process. Social relations in the classroom have thus a bearing on learning not only because they allow children freedom to express themselves but because they make the teachers and learners devote their attention to learning. These relations can be further enhanced if the learners are able to work among themselves without fear and are accountable to each other. This brings me to another aspect of the implications of the input hypothesis - the communicative aspect of language teaching.

So much ink has been spilt on the efficacy of communicative teaching that the term "communicative" conjures up an image of quickly rearranging chairs and desks for group work and the use of old newspapers for teaching English, provided the learners are seen to interact. It has to be accepted that even a teacher-fronted lesson may be communicative if the teacher is skilled enough to foster an atmosphere of communication. However, it has to be acknowledged that communication among the learners stands a better chance of being fostered in pair work and group work where the learners are given the opportunity to talk. The language the teacher employs in the classroom may put the pupil at a disadvantage because the latter may be constrained by the specialized language used by the teacher or the teacher's language may be detached from the pupil's personal experience and make the pupil fail to understand what the teacher is trying to get across to him. One may argue that this is unlikely to arise where both the teacher and the pupil share a common language as is the case in Tanzania where both the teacher and pupils speak Kiswahili and might both have grown up speaking the language at home. It has to be admitted that even if both the teacher and the pupil speak the same language in their homes, school language is different from that at home both in content and the way it is structured. School language is intended for pedagogical purposes rather than for maintaining social relations. Furthermore, school language has to conform to the rules of the classroom in which the teacher initiates the talk and replies to what the student says in response to his questions. As the teacher and students have different status and roles in the learning process, it is obvious that the language works to the advantage of the teacher who wields authority in the classroom. I will now consider the relationship between the teacher's authority and language and the role played by language in enhancing or hindering learning.

#### **1.4.2 Teacher status and roles, classroom language and learning**

Sociologists usually define the word "status" in terms of man's position in society. Hence, a teacher, a priest or village ('traditional') doctor will be regarded with respect by virtue of the position he has in society. This position may have been conferred on him either by birth as in the case of kings and queens, but in most cases it is a position conferred by one's qualification. It is no wonder that the term "status quo" is often looked on with derision since it relates to a person's social standing which may, in some cases, not seem to change and which is deemed to be an impediment to other people's progress.

The status of the teacher in the classroom is seen in terms of his academic qualifications which are recognized by educational and governmental institutions which appoint him to the job as well as the students who accept his authority in the classroom. It is in view of this that the teacher's role, rights and responsibilities differ much from those of his pupils. The role of the teacher as a respected member of society in Tanzania can be said to go as far back as the old pre-school days when the "Maalim" or Muslim teacher was held with great respect for his teaching and moral advice to his followers. As far as the Christians were concerned, the village Christian (particularly Catholic) catechist usually doubled up as a religious teacher who taught catechism and was also a teacher of reading and writing. He thus played a key role in preparing children in kindergarten schools for Standard 1 (One) in primary school. The role of the teacher and the respect he got was thus greater in the rural areas than in towns, although the Maalim who taught the Koran was expected to get the same respect in town. The impact of the teacher was felt and probably indirectly reinforced by colonial rule. While it might seem plausible in that it helped cement discipline and promote learning, it often resulted in the teacher's wielding excessive authority which in the early 1970's led to some violence and strikes in some of the secondary schools.

Though not as authoritarian as he might have been in the 1960s, the teacher still does not get as much respect as he used to in the past. Two factors account for this. The first is that the teacher is no longer seen as a 'conduit' through whom many parents' children could pass to go to secondary school, and though the teacher may have nothing to do with his school not having any child selected for secondary school, the parents may still blame him and subsequently not respect him. The big primary school drop-out rate in developing countries due to economic problems may thus have adversely affected the relationship between the school and the community which still sees the former as a contributing factor to the children's success or failure. Another factor regarding the status of the teacher has to do with the teacher's financial position. Teachers are not highly paid, despite the teaching allowances they have been getting since 1988, and the fact that unlike other professionals the teacher does not enjoy the benefits of remunerations accruing from extensive travelling or bonuses makes him rely on his job for his living as he is unlikely to be accorded respect in a community whose status is equated with how materially well off one is (however unsocialistic it may seem!).

Gremmo, Holec and Riley (1985) writing about the role of the teacher and how these roles affect the way he interacts with his pupils see the teacher's roles in a language classroom as being embodied in both the illocutionary or communicative acts the teacher engages in as well as the interactive or discursive acts which pertain to how the teacher distributes turns or rights to speak in the classroom. Gremmo, Holec and Riley (1985:39) state that

Role is the enactment of interactional privileges and duties which are realized by certain types of acts. In very general terms, these acts fall into two main categories: illocutionary or communicative acts and interactive or discursive acts. Illocutionary acts include persuading, forbidding, agreeing, inviting and so on. Interactive acts include talking and giving the floor, interrupting., opening/replying/closing in an exchange

What this means is that the teacher holds a crucial position in the classroom since he is the one who nominates who should speak and often even prescribes what he should say and when he should say it. The teacher is the only one who decides to initiate the topic /lesson and close it. The roles of the teacher and the learner are thus defined in classroom interactions. Where interaction is lacking because the teacher decides to talk alone or because the learners cannot communicate in the language of instruction, then the teacher will be in total control of the discourse. The latter situation seems to apply to the Tanzanian classroom where the learners are unable to communicate with the teacher because the former lack the language with which to express themselves.

It is indisputable that much of classroom talk is dominated by teacher talk (Flanders 1970) which is constrained because it follows the Initiation-Response- Evaluation sequence (Sinclair and Coulthard,1975; Coulthard, 1977) with initiation and evaluation being solely the prerogative of the teacher (Bellack et al 1966) whose "frame of reference" is paramount rather than the pupils' own knowledge and personal experience (Edwards and Furlong, 1978; Barnes, Britton and Rosen, 1969; Stubbs, 1976; Dillon and Searle, 1981). While it is obvious that the learner has to try as much as possible to adapt the content and register of the teacher, it is also true that the learner has to be given the opportunity to relate the content of the subject to his personal experiences so as to make it more relevant to his environment. The fact that the teacher's language in the classroom may mostly serve to restrict the pupils' expansion of ideas and his personal experiences, explains why failure by our students to think out ideas in the classroom may be laid on the teachers. I will try to

illustrate this in the transcript of a teacher-fronted lesson tape recorded by me for the purpose of this study and then compare it with another transcript of a discussion based on the same composition task.

In this transcript (See Appendix R Transcript iii), the teacher has drawn the attention of his students to pictures involving a descriptive composition and now goes over the lesson with his students before they write it later on their own.

0001T: Anyway by introduction what can you see /..5../ in this picture - forget about this (points at the pictures of the model composition) because this is another (he removes the model pictures and rolls them up). Now this is the picture now you are going to write about /..5../ What can you see roughly here in the picture - before writing?

0002S1: I can see two houses

0003T: /..10../ only two houses? /..5../ yes?

0004S2: I can see one tree

0005T: one tree - only two houses and one tree?

0006S1: /..5../ I can see two men and one woman

0007T: two men and one woman - only that ?

0008S1: I can see the sun

0009T: You can see the sun mmh only that ?

0010S1: /..8../ also I can see the cooking pot

0011T: cooking pot, OK those are the things which are seen in this picture

In this teacher-fronted transcript which was one of the shortest, we see that the first turn (turn 0001) is taken by the teacher removing the model composition picture from the blackboard and telling students what they were going to do. The teacher repeats the objects pupils mention as seeing, apparently as a way of summarizing and, presumably, to remind the class about what has been said so that they can remember the rest. By using the phrase "only that?" the teacher is checking the pupils' understanding of the text and expects them to add some more information (apparently, information the teacher himself is aware of ). When the teacher is satisfied by the list given by pupils, he abruptly ends the lesson telling them "OK, those are the things or objects which are seen in this picture" (turn 0011). We hear pupils mentioning people but in no way does the teacher relate them to events they are familiar with. The teacher's aim in the lesson seems to be simply to get a list of things seen in the picture. After the objects have been mentioned to the teacher's satisfaction, the teacher ends the talk, expecting that all is well and in the lesson segment that follows, he tells them of what they are



required to write. Another issue concerns the extent to which the teacher interacts with his pupils. All through the lesson, the teacher interacted with only three pupils while more than thirty pupils merely listened. This restricted interaction was brought about by the fact that by repeating the pupils' answers, the teacher restricted the interaction to these pupils while the rest had to look for other alternative answers.

What happened in one of the pair work groups of the same class is illustrative of the opportunity students are able to have to interact in a way denied them in teacher fronted activities, to create information and expand it and even draw on their personal experiences to. This is revealed in the following exchange in which students are discussing the picture (See Appendix R, Transcript xiv).

0002S2: Now Mr. Fred what can you see on your picture?

0003S1: On my picture I can see two houses and then I can see a man- I think- he is holding he is holding a stick and nearby I can see a man - cooking some food near near her there is a man going towards her and near those two houses I can see a tree /.../ but - I don't know - this things which kinds of fruit it is - I think the fruits these two houses are different one is better than the other it as two windows one door is missing but the other hasn't even one window and near the sea there is a river but you also add on my picture what can you see on your pictures also?

We note that in turn 0003 the pupil (S1) not only mentions about the man and woman but goes on to explain what they are doing. It is also interesting to note that S1 does not confine himself only to what he sees in the pictures but in a later turn infers that the man could be a fisherman and that the chair the woman is sitting on, judging from its appearance, could be a traditional chair. This is shown by such hypothetical markers as "I think" and "maybe", which they ably use by relating them to their personal experiences as they talk about the boy in this transcript (See Appendix R Transcript xiv).

0023S1: a woman is cooking some food and a man is carrying - [carrying]

0024S2: [carrying]

0025S2: carrying fish with we can say that he is coming from fishing aah and that that boy - on the picture - I don't know their son

0026S1: I think he is coming from playing

0027S2: with his fellows now in the evening he has come for

0028S1: yaah

0029S2: he is coming for his dinner - and sleep I think so

0030S2: yaah and for me I can say that he is he has seen aah his father coming from sleeping so he is running to her to his mother or maybe he mother and - he is saying that - eh my father is coming - he has got a fish so today we are going [ to enjoy] (laughter)

0030aS1: [yes] yaah- he is going quickly to inform [his] mother

0031S2: [and] yaah to inform his mother seem he is very happy

00321: yaah

Phillips (1985) writes about five characteristics which were discernible in the conversation he tape recorded in student-student interactions to underscore the importance pupil discourse has on learning. The first one which he calls the "hypothetical mode" is a "speculative discourse" in which group members work together in a hypothetical manner, providing suggestions. The "experiential mode" is related to the pupils' encoding of personal experiences; the "argumentative" mode relates to the interlocutors' presentation of their own points of view; the "operational mode" is concerned with the way they point out objects using demonstratives and are therefore identifying from others; and finally, the "expositional mode" is involved in wh- question types. Students who are well trained in organizing discussions are likely to indulge in those modes of discourse and hence construct meanings which they are unable to do in the teacher controlled discourse. In the following exchanges which are a continuation of the above transcript, the pupils are evaluating each other's statements and are even able to correct each other. They repeat each other's statements in approval and as they get carried away by the discussion they interrupt each other. The interruptions provide them with a further opportunity to recollect ideas, something they could not do to a teacher in a teacher fronted class especially in primary schools and secondary schools where interruption is a sign of disrespect to a teacher (See Appendix R, Transcript xiv).

0009S1: Let us compare two pictures in on your eh the sun is not shine eh the sun is not shine eh the sun is not shine eh (with a rising intonation)

0010S2: the sun is not shining

0011S1: [and]

0011aS2: [also] this man is carrying a stick instead of fish

0012S1: is just carrying a stick instead of [a fish] eeh (with a rising intonation)

0012aS2: [a fish] and there is another man running towards this woman

0013S1: and I think his their son

0014S2: perhaps

0015S1: perhaps

Despite their poor English, the pupils in this transcript are able to say something and they understand each other. I believe that despite our large classes, we can foster creativity and promote problem solving. in classrooms. We have to contend with large classes for some time to come because of the financial and economic constraints, but this does not prevent us from assigning exercises that could promote communication among the learners, rather than limit our pupils to learning grammar which is of course essential but may by itself not be helpful in helping the learners in day-to-day communication. This also calls for the teachers to adjust their language so that it is simple and unthreatening. A student who regards the teacher who is speaking Kiswahili with awe will be filled with greater awe when confronted by the same teacher speaking English. The teacher's classroom language may thus alienate his student, and it will become increasingly more alienating if it is a foreign language.

A number of studies (See 2.3 below) have found that the language of the school may be an inhibiting factor to learning. Notable among these are the studies of Wells (1981a; 1986) and Tizard and Hughes (1984), conducted in some schools in England and the studies of Phillips (1972) and Heath (1983) in the United States. Wells and Tizard and Hughes studied children at home and at school and tried to trace the patterns of language they used. They also compared the language used by their teachers at school with the language used by their parents at home with a view to finding out which of them helped the children to learn.

Wells (1986) found that the styles of interaction at home between the children and their parents were different from those at school. The interactions at home involved adults adjusting children's speech through comprehension checks, repetitions and expansions and furthermore, mothers encouraged their children to participate and also corrected and extended children's utterances. When the same children were observed at school, they were seen to initiate fewer exchanges. They asked fewer questions and made fewer requests. Their utterances were also simpler and contained a narrow range of semantic content. On the other hand, teachers dominated the interactions and initiated a majority of interactions through requests. Tizard and Hughes (1984) found that the nursery school children they studied, displayed a language at school which was different from that at home. At school they asked fewer questions than at home and often failed to answer the teacher's questions and contribute to

conversations which were often not related to objects or contexts which were familiar to the children. Phillips (1972) found that groups of Warm Springs Indian children native patterns of interaction contrasted with the way conversation was conducted in the classroom and this made the Indian children fail to participate fully in classroom activities. Heath (1983) studied how language is used by black and white children from two working class communities. The interaction patterns of black children were related to story telling and differed from the instructional interaction patterns of the school. It was found that the black children's patterns of interaction were closely tied up with their parents' interactional patterns such as the rare use of known-answer questions. Donahue (1985) explains how school language is likely to pose some difficulty to learning disabled children who have to understand the teacher's verbal and non-verbal cues if they are to succeed. Grimes and Wadsworth (1986:154) studied teacher talk in home economics lessons and found how it inhibits learning opportunity as it is "more rigid in convention, more narrow in range of function and allows individuals more limited performance in school than they show themselves capable of at home".

The child who enters a secondary school has already been exposed to teacher talk at primary school but he has to contend with the new teachers at secondary school who are teaching in a foreign language. This means that the young secondary school student is faced with the task of not only understanding the language in which the school subjects are taught, which is both a linguistic and cognitive task, but he is also faced with the task of trying to understand the teacher's style of talking. As I have tried to point out, a teacher, however innovative he may be in contriving new methods of teaching, is faced with the task of finishing his teaching target so as to prepare his pupils for examinations. It is, therefore, worth mentioning a little about the secondary school English language syllabus.

### **1.5 The Secondary School English Language Syllabus**

The first serious attempt to prepare a syllabus of English language teaching was in 1969 when the English Language Panel prepared "A Handbook for English Language Teachers". The syllabus was revised in 1973 and 1979 and the last one I am aware of is the 1986 English language syllabus prepared by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Institute of Curriculum Development (formerly the Institute of Education). The first part of "A Handbook

for English Language Teachers" consisted essentially of oral/oral work and grammar, thus reflecting a legacy of the audio-lingual approach. The contents were mixed up with some reading, summary writing and continuous writing, the latter of which were based on some structure drills. The second part consisted essentially of methodology for the teacher on drills and the use of audio-visual aids and class library. The third part was a specimen of some past examination papers, and class reader list, being therefore essentially managerial. As Brumfit (1980: 77) observes:

The course planned was highly structured but it was intended to be integrated, not a series of separate lessons on comprehension, writing, oral work etc... and as fully contextualized as possible.

The fact is that despite being contextualized in dialogues and short stories, the syllabus did not (and does not yet) seem to have relevance to the real use of the language outside the classroom. Moreover, teachers tend to be much more interested in the grammar of the text and not in relating the content to use of language outside the classroom. Given the fact that the teacher has to move on to another target structure and thus finish the prescribed part of the syllabus before the students sit for examinations, it is likely that not enough attention will be paid to the meaning of the context. Thus although the contextualization was still stressed in the 1973 revised syllabus, the trend appeared to be the same. The 1979 revised syllabus was only a slight modification of this and it confined the writing aspect mostly to "The Writing Project" that essentially focused on Literature in English (the intensive reading of African Writers Series books set in the National Examination). The 1986 English language syllabus spells out the objectives of English language teaching in Form Two (the class from which I collected data) as follows:

By the end of Form Two the students should be able to:

1. Speak English with acceptable pronunciation
2. Express himself in English using coordinated constructions
3. Write short descriptions, book reports, autobiographies, friendly letters, telephone messages and telegrams.
4. Read simplified readers and briefly explain their content
5. Respond appropriately to simple spoken English

It is not clear what the "acceptable pronunciation" is, but what is evident is that emphasis still seems to be on the accuracy of pronunciation rather than on the

intelligibility of the message. The writing programme as shown in the third objective (above) appears rather ambitious as I do not envisage pupils being able to write autobiographies let alone write down telephone messages and telegrams which require language ability to summarize the information heard or written. I will now attempt to look into the methodology employed in realizing the objectives of the syllabus.

## **1.6 Methodology**

The teaching of English language in both primary and secondary schools does not seem to follow a prescribed methodology. A teacher has to use a method which he considers appropriate depending on the level of ability of his class and the nature of the task outlined in the text book. What seems important is that the teacher has to ensure that

Pupils are encouraged to observe, think and learn through doing. Lecturing is discouraged and the syllabi carry a column for teachers' and pupils' activities for adults, group discussion led by trained discussion leaders and practical demonstration are the main methods used (Ministry of Education 1982:19)

Pupils' activities are taken as a basis for assigning classwork, although the teacher can vary the activities as long as he is within the prescribed syllabus and in time for examinations. The teacher will decide which method he considers appropriate at the material time and will decide whether the class should remain seated with each student at his desk or whether the class should split into groups as is the case in dealing with the multiple choice reading comprehension questions. It is in view of this that attention should now be focused on the teacher training offered, since the nature of the methodology followed is to a great extent dictated by the training the teachers receive.

## **1.7 Teacher training and the teaching force**

The training of teachers is an important aspect of the educational development of any country and reflects the potential quality of education to be provided or that which is in operation. In Tanzania, the training of teachers is undertaken by the Government in Teacher Training Colleges as well as the University of Dar es Salaam. The former mainly trains Grade A and Grade C teachers who are assigned to teach in primary schools. About five of the Teachers Colleges train Diploma teachers who teach in secondary schools alongside university

graduate teachers. Only two Teachers Colleges offering a diploma have been specially designated to train English language teachers. It is this manpower that has to contend with an increasingly big number of secondary school pupils. In 1989, for example, there were only 3,866 teachers for 57,482 pupils in the 124 public secondary schools (Government aided secondary schools, this being a teacher pupil ratio of 1:15 (National Report of the United Republic of Tanzania). In private secondary schools (privately sponsored and fee-paying schools) the situation was worse as there were only 2,982 teachers in the 195 private secondary schools having a total of 75,003 pupils and the teacher-pupil ratio was 1:25. Private schools are also faced with a situation where some of the teachers are not qualified teachers but have simply opted for the job of teaching, though they may be trained later.

The question of being a specialist or a non-specialist is also important to consider since some of the teachers in secondary schools are Literature teachers who are sent to teach in secondary schools on the assumption that the Methodology course they get at the university is adequate to enable them to teach effectively, and, I believe, on the expectation that one who teaches Literature can also teach English language. Bowers (1983) highlights the need to take into account the staffing formula when developing a curriculum and noting also the number of specialist and non-specialist teachers. The specialist -non-specialist ratio could go a long way towards helping us to see how many teachers need to be given training as well as being able to see the skilled input which could be deployed in schools as well as at the Ministry of Education or within the Institute of Curriculum Development. It seems so far that only university graduates can be seen as specialist teachers since most of the diploma teachers do not specialize in the subject but are trained to teach not less than two subjects; moreover, they have a shorter study period in comparison with their university counterparts (2 years for diploma teachers and 3 years for university undergraduates).

Since primary school education leads to a selection of pupils for secondary education for those few who do exceedingly well, it is worth pointing out about the nature of training provided to potential primary school teachers in Teachers Colleges as well as the problems and constraints encountered. Junior secondary school leavers who have indicated an interest to teach and who have been recommended by the headmasters of their respective schools are the ones who usually go for teacher training. Most of them will have passed Division Three of the "O" Level (Secondary School Certificate Examination)

although there are some who obtain Division Two but fall short of some credits to gain entry into Form V ("A" Level) and who get selected for primary school teacher training. At the Primary School Teacher Training Colleges, some teacher training is provided together with some training in all subjects taught at the primary school level. Because of the high demand for teachers, it is not possible to let each teacher specialize in subjects of his choice although the newly recruited teachers may be free at times to choose teaching subjects in which they feel they are competent, at the schools where they teach. The unfortunate but unavoidable lack of specialization in English, for example, has its disadvantages. Some of the teachers of English in primary schools may not be of the right calibre. Some of them may be uninterested in teaching English but find themselves teaching it especially where there are many Grade "C" teachers (teachers with a primary education) who are not usually regarded as competent enough to teach Mathematics and English to higher classes of primary schools.

Although in-service teacher training is provided to English teachers from time to time, it does because of financial constraints, involve only one or a few teachers from each school. Sometimes seminars may be run locally by regional or district education authorities but the duration of these courses are usually very short and sometimes the seminars become a weekend affair when teachers are free from teaching (on Saturdays). There is currently, a programme to train all teachers with primary education (former Grade C teachers) so that they can attain secondary education level. However, the content of the English courses seems to have remained unaltered and even at the university emphasis seems to be on Linguistics rather than Language Teaching. Roy Campbell (1990) is thus right when he states that many teachers at both the primary level and secondary level are unable to express themselves well because 'their training provides them with a wealth of knowledge about English but with very little opportunity for using it in meaningful ways'. Teacher training and methodology are thus closely related and any consideration of one must take into account the other. However, adopting a methodology which we regard as helping the learners learn effectively requires that we tailor the methodology to the teaching materials.



## 1.8 Language teaching materials

Instructional materials have a crucial role to play in teaching and mediate between methodology and learning objectives. Cunningsworth (1984) outlines four principles which could be said to form the basis on which the usefulness of instructional materials can be determined. These are formulated as conditions which one has to observe when choosing materials for teaching. Cunningsworth advises thus:

1. Relate the teaching materials to your aims and objectives
2. Be aware of what language is used for and select teaching materials which will help equip students to use the language efficiently for their own purpose.
3. Keep your students' learning needs in mind.
4. Consider the relations between language, the learning problems and the learner (pp:5.6)

Before examining the position of teaching material in relation to the principles outlined above, it is worth noting whether the available materials enable the Tanzanian teacher to tailor his methods to the texts provided and at the same time to the student's needs. The Ministry of Education is responsible for providing funds for teaching materials in secondary schools. However, the production and distribution of these materials is done by the Institute of Curriculum Development which also prepares syllabuses and sends them to all schools after deliberating with the various subject panels and getting the approval of the Ministry of Education. There are usually set-books recommended by the Ministry of Education and the Institute of Curriculum Development for English teaching although these have mostly been those to do with Literature in English. An attempt has been made since 1986 to provide students with wider reading through extensive reading of supplementary readers, most of which have been donated through the British Council. Forms 1 and Forms 11 are the beneficiaries of this project. In addition to this an attempt has been made not to supplant but to supplement Allen's 'Living English Structure' which has for long dominated the mainly structure oriented language teaching in Tanzania. A new coursebook which is to be geared to language use was thus launched on what was said to be a trial basis. Grant and Wang'ombe's book, 'Language in Use' which is in four volumes is now being used. The book, unlike Allen's 'Living English Structure' does not focus on structure alone but attempts to integrate reading, speaking and listening. Two or

three-day courses are sometimes conducted by the British Council on the teaching of English using these texts. It is too early to say what impact this may have on the teaching of English in secondary schools. Two constraints are, however, worth mentioning. In the first place the courses provided on the use of the book are very short. Secondly, the number of books available is very small and stationery for printing exercises on handouts is not readily available. Another intractable problem may not be within the teachers' solution. The teacher has to teach according to the prescribed syllabus. This means that he may not necessarily let his students learn meaningfully from the book as he has to conform to the time allocated or even abandon the book altogether and spend more time on 'Literature in English' for which, after all, more marks (60 per cent) are awarded in the National Form IV English Examination. Baker (1983) and Grant (1983) see the examination as an important variable when considering what to teach. Grant (1983 :69) posits that:

The central problem of any curriculum worker concerned with the teaching of language arts is that while his prime concern is naturally the learning of the language for genuine communication purposes, the teachers, the students and indeed the examination system even, may often seem to place a higher premium on usage rather than use.

An instance of tailoring language skills to the examination is the virtual neglect of promoting listening skills (oral/aural skills). After the last oral examination in 1973, there has been a virtual neglect of speaking and listening skills, apparently because of the lack of audio equipment but also due to some other reasons, one of which has been the feeling among some teachers that one needs to have a knowledge of linguistics and particularly, phonetics, in order to teach students to talk.

I have tried to make a review of the English language teaching situation in Tanzania so as to make it easy to understand the context in which writing, and particularly, the teaching of composition writing, takes place. The next section will now be devoted to the teaching of writing in Tanzanian secondary school after I have briefly outlined the current pedagogical views on the teaching of writing as a linguistic, social and cognitive process rather than a mechanical process as seems to have been practised.

## 1.9 Composition writing in Secondary Schools

The importance of compositions needs no overemphasizing. We need to organize information and ideas and expand them in order to make our intentions or thoughts known to others through compositions. It is for these reasons that compositions have for many years attracted the attention of educationalists and academicians.

Despite its crucial position in the school curriculum, composition writing in Tanzania, just as in many countries, has been seen as a skill which needs no training as it depends on the learner's intuition and language capability. Composition writing is also seen as supplementing grammar lessons and is assigned so as to ascertain if the learner can use the grammar he has learnt to express his thoughts. Thus, it is common practice in Tanzania for English language teachers to assign composition writing exercises separately from grammar lessons and usually towards the end of the term.

A number of studies carried out in Britain and the United States led to the realization of the inadequacies of writing in schools and can be said to have contributed to the current methodologies being tried out in the United States and Britain to revolutionize the teaching of writing. Most of these studies see writing in schools as infrequent and limited to a few words or sentences taken down in dictations (Applebee 1981; Britton et al 1975; Spencer 1983; Gilbert 1989). Spencer, for instance, found that in the secondary schools he surveyed in Scotland, 70 per cent of the pupils in the English lesson did not write more than a page of continuous writing and that discussions concerning writing in pairs or groups were rare. He also noted that the writing lessons, being teacher-dominated, made the learners regard the teacher as the only audience to whom they had to direct their ideas. Applebee (1981; 1984) in his studies in American secondary schools found that in English lessons, 39 per cent of writing activities were at the mechanical level such as filling in blanks, or providing one or two sentences and the trend was the same in other subjects. Writing was teacher-dependent (with the teacher providing all information) and there was a lot of reliance on testing.

It has to be admitted, however, that no 'ideal' composition teaching model seems so far to have been evolved. What fills the literature on composition writing, appears to be experimentations from Britain and the USA, which have left other countries to adapt to their needs what they think could be appropriate. Both the British and the American traditions can be said to have been motivated

by ideological considerations, as evidenced by the Process Approach in the United States for example, which in claiming to involve the student in the writing process-under the banner of democracy! -appears to leave him to his own devices on the assumption that he is competent enough to generate his own text. The need to regard the child as an active problem solver, arising from the studies of Piaget in cognitive psychology, led to attempts to make writing take into account the child's thinking. Writing was no longer to be regarded as a rhetorical skill showing one's prowess in ideas as was the case from Aristotle's times, but it was to be regarded as a cognitive act. This led to the notion of Process Writing which gained currency in America. I will be pointing out what could be the shortcomings of this approach but I think it is worth looking into the 'traditional' approach briefly before embarking on other approaches which have been evolved.

### **1.9.1 The 'traditional' approach**

The traditional approach to writing, which was prevalent in the early sixties and is still prevalent in many countries can be traced back to the behaviourist approach to teaching language with its emphasis on speaking and the learning of structural patterns of language which is drilled by pupils. The basic aim of teaching composition is essentially to reinforce the grammar learnt. A topic will be provided, but it more often than not will not be related to the student's need and will be addressing the teacher rather than the class or the community around the school as the intended audience. The mid-sixties saw an attempt to generate writing that would not be confined to the sentence but would extend beyond the sentence. Substitution tables and matching tables are used in the teaching of grammar in the expectation that the pupil will attempt to make meaning from the chunks of sentences provided. As the approach is prescriptive, the pupils end up making up a story conceived by the teacher and probably not very well understood by them. In their criticism of school writing, Christie (1986; 1987) Martin (1985) and Martin and Rothery (1986) see school writing as imposed by both political institutions and classrooms and they see this as a source of pupils' failure. What they mean is that educational institutions in an attempt to implement the ideological will of the States, impose forms of writing that may not correspond to the students' need and which may make students fail to write well as they lack the background knowledge and the linguistic knowledge for the writing tasks. I find their view a contentious one since it is almost impossible to divorce writing from the context of the society.

While it is true that children's needs have to be catered for, it is equally true that these needs have to be catered for within the framework of society's objectives. Topics relating to what happens in institutions around children could still be made enjoyable and make the child to fulfil his needs as well as those of his society. I tend to concur with Christie (1986) and Martin (1985), however, in their perception that in classrooms teachers have tended to assign pupils - especially in primary schools and Junior Secondary classes - composition topics that may have genuinely been intended to foster creativity but which may not enable their perception that learner to learn other subjects.

In composition classes it is usual for teachers to assign story writing on the assumption that children can easily write narrative compositions because they are used to hearing stories at home or from their parents. The negative effect of this view is that children will not develop the variety of genres required for school writing. (Christie 1986;1987; Martin 1985) and might be regarded as academically incompetent. At secondary school, children need to master the language of Geography or Chemistry. In examinations they are required to write essays which draw on their conceptual knowledge of the subject and their linguistic knowledge. Failure by English teachers to prepare these children to face these tasks leads to children performing badly in these subjects whose teachers often feel reluctant to explain points regarding English as they feel not only that they are not competent enough to do so, but think that it is the English teacher's duty. Assigning simple and interesting composition tasks to elementary level children may be a good idea but an attempt need to be made later to tailor the tasks to what they do in other subjects. Martin and Rothery (1986:260) stress this because some teachers may feel that some children have cognitive or other disabilities when the truth could be that "they simply may not have mastered one or another of the written genres which are highly valued in education".

The main problem affecting the child at school is that he comes to school with a language that he need improving in order to approximate the school language (Wells 1981b; 1986; Heath 1983) and it is the writing he is exposed to that will orient him to the "essayist" style (Olson 1977) demanded by the school. The situation may be even more confounding to the second foreign language learner who is not even well grounded in writing narratives in his own language. Martin and Rothery (1986) argue that mastering a genre means mastering a culture. Ostensibly, this means immersing oneself in the knowledge

of the culture and the language structures and lexis in which that culture gets encoded.

### 1.9.2 The Britton composition model

The approach to composition writing by the *Writing Across the Curriculum Project* which culminated into the publication of *The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18)* in England (Britton, Burgess, Martin, McLeod and Rosen 1975), has been a seminal contribution to the teaching and learning of English. The work, based on samples of school children's writing, sees writing as encompassing all language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and draws on the day-to-day functions of both oral and written language. The Britton composition model, categorizes writing in terms of two main functions- the transactional use of language and the expressive. The *Transactional* writing category is regarded as writing to get things done and is subdivided into the *informative* subcategory (pertaining to recording, reporting, generalizing and theorizing) and the *conative* subcategory which has the regulative and the persuasive subcategories. *Expressive* writing is geared to the expression of one's feelings and opinions as exemplified in personal letters and other forms of writing to a known audience.

The Britton model sees the writer as playing a *participant* role or a *spectator* role, the former having to do with how dynamically the writer engages in the production of a text whereas the latter applies to one who, despite enjoying what he reads or listens, does not engage actively in further construction of the text. The spectator role is thus seen to represent another category called the *poetic* mode, which is writing that exists for its own sake or for the writer's satisfaction. Transactional writing would, on the other hand, be represented within the participant role, while expressive writing "straddles the participant/spectator distinction ...able to move freely from one role to the other across a boundary which is, at this central point, a shadowy one" (Britton et al 1975:92). Expressive writing is thus in between the Transactional and the Poetic, but like the other two, it occupies a position along the Transactional-Poetic continuum. The model could be presented simply thus:

TRANSACTIONAL  
(Participant role)

EXPRESSIVE

POETIC  
(Spectator role)

Expressive writing is seen by Britton et al (1975:90) as ideal to school because expressive language is "language close to the self. It has the function of

revealing the speaker, verbalizing his consciousness and displaying his close relation with a listener or a reader". Expressive writing is thus envisaged to promote fluency and to allow learners to be active participants who will not be deterred from interacting for fear of making language errors.

It does not seem all that easy to distinguish Britton et al's categories from one another because they tend to overlap. However, Britton's model is a great contribution to the teaching and learning of composition for three main reasons. Firstly, the model underscores the importance of regarding writing not as a discrete skill but as a component of all the language skills. Secondly, the model brings to the fore the importance of the role of audience awareness in writing, making teachers assign tasks that will make the teachers appear to be part of the learners' audience but not as examiners on whom the pupils' sole attention will be turned (Rosen 1972/1973; Rosen and Rosen 1973). Finally, the model is contributory to the teaching of English for Specific Purposes and could be applied to the teaching of English for the improvement of other school subjects.

I would, however, regard the model as being too child-centred. Although attention has got to be focused on the needs of the learner, the model seems to focus attention on the learner first and the community around the learner later. By fostering the learner's personal experiences and the here-and-now situations around him, the model tends to play down on the extraneous forces which are supposed to mould the child and to which the child's writing ought to be directed. I would be inclined to agree with Moss (1981:21) that the model

ignores the subconscious demands which culture and history make on us all- the interpretations of the world which are ready made for us at birth and which we only "re-discover"; or, more likely, that we unconsciously accept as "*facts*".

Perhaps this is too harsh a criticism of *The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18)* or is a failure to understand the socio-cultural or ideological setting in which the nature of writing envisaged by Britton et al (1975) develops. However, while it is true that in all cultures, writing for one's own sake (poetic writing) is ideal for developing one's individuality, in some cultures which project the collective will before that of the individual, wouldn't poetic writing be a luxury to be dispensed with? Until more alternative models emerge, the Britton model will still have an august place in the teaching of composition.

### 1.9.3 The Process Writing approach

The Process Writing approach conceived in the United States, notably by Donald Graves was intended to be a shift from the traditional product oriented approach to one which would emphasize cognitive acts. It was also intended to make the child write for real readers rather than imagined audiences. At the centre of the whole process was talking. Verbalisation and conceptualization were regarded as pivotal to the expression of meaning before writing took place (Green 1988). Thinking is thus not only a skill but also a tool for enhancing learning. Since one can know what the other thinks through speaking, the process approach emphasized that learners should talk about the text they have created with the teachers and among themselves. It was envisaged that it would be a three-stage process. The prewriting stage would involve brainstorming and the taking down of notes of main ideas; the planning stage would involve drafting, rewriting and editing and the final stage would be the editing of what had been written. These stages correspond to those advocated by Flower and Hayes who are proponents of the Process Approach but who see it as a cognitive processing act. Flower and Hayes (1977) have formulated what they call the Cognitive Process Model of Composing which lays the essence of composing on the "planning stage, the translation stage and the reviewing stage". The planning stage is the stage when the learner uses his memory to encode information and then organize it into new knowledge to create a text.

Before text production takes place the process of translation or "an attempt to match linguistic knowledge to the knowledge based schema that result from the planning process" (Stein, 1986:228) has to occur. This is regarded as a crucial stage in which the learner integrates his knowledge based schema with his linguistic knowledge in order to create a text. The reviewing (or revising) stage comprises editing, adding, integrating or deleting information with a view to creating a coherent discourse. These stages are not mutually exclusive as it is likely that a learner could be reviewing and at the same time go back to reorganizing the information; something which makes the process approach a recursive one. It is not clear to me whether the Process Approach was designed to be a pedagogic model for teachers or whether it is another prescription for students learning to write. What is important, however, is its role in meaningful composition writing.



One of the main criticisms of the Process Approach has been that it tends to focus too much on the cognitive aspect of learning and in so doing ignores the social dimension of learning which is crucial to a learner (Faigley, 1986; Bizzell 1986; Farris, 1987; Reither, 1985; Stein, 1986; Moore, 1990; Foley, 1990). Stein (1986) argues that the Process Approach assumes that the writer already has a background knowledge of the content and language, and that what remains for him is to use the procedures prescribed to access that knowledge. To be able to talk about what one has composed may not be all that easy for elementary learners and it is, therefore, about whether the Process Approach would be of great use to EFL learners. The fact that it overemphasizes meaning rather than form could mean that process writing may have to wait until the learner has acquired some background knowledge - both linguistic and schematic - before it is employed as a writing strategy. Moreover, the approach appears to lay emphasis on process rather than on content. Although the process states that the significance of interaction in learning, the interaction envisaged seems to be concerned with how the learner has gone about solving the problem rather than on examination of the knowledge created by joint construction. I believe that the two should go together. Moore (1990:392) argues that

In encouraging a focus of means in preference to ends or strategies in preference to knowledge, process approaches disguise rather than obviate the ends they endorse and the plans to which they work

While it is important that the learner should know what happens as he constructs a text, I would think that this is secondary to a foreign language learner whose concern (especially at the primary stage of learning) is with the product, not because of the lack of interest in the process but because at an elementary level his participation in the process would be ineffective. Silva (1990) criticises the process approach for encouraging individuality too much and for being unrealistic in not preparing pupils for the kind of writing that they are expected to do at High School and even after school. He argues that it is unrealistic to expect a student to have the freedom to write on what he likes because after all, school writing is still prescribed writing dictated by the syllabus and examinations. Other writers (Bizzell, 1986; Barrs, 1983; Faigley, 1986) have criticized the process approach for ignoring individual differences among writers, since the same writer could respond differently during the planning and revising stage as he shifts from one discourse to another. This is the point which prompts Horowitz (1986) and Hudelson (1988) to argue that the process approach is relevant to certain tasks and not to academic writing, for example. They argue that academic writing could have specific instructions as

there for laying out and completing a business letter for example, and students would simply suggest what content they regard is appropriate to them.

Although it is still a popular approach to writing, critics, especially in Australian linguistic circles have conceived of an alternative approach that seeks to confer on writing its social interactive perspective. The alternative is the "genre based approach" to writing about which I will comment briefly.

#### **1.9.4 The genre based approach to writing**

The genre based approach to writing draws its inspiration from Vygotsky (1962; 1978) and underscores the importance of both speaking and writing as being crucial in the learner's initial learning stages. The proponents of the approach argue that thought and communication are mediated socially and hence, the social aspect of learning should be given prominence so that the child is able to solve problems which if he finds difficult, may be resolved by a more capable peer, a stage of problem solving which Vygotsky calls "proximal development". These views are summed up in the words of Foley (1990: 232) who states that the genre approach "sees the individual in the Vygotskian sense of the self-regulated individual achieved through interactions with his/her own zone of proximal development". Genre theorists thus advocate a social approach to learning and argue that while they do not want to stifle individual creativity, they want individuality to be "created, negotiated, and sustained in social experience" (Christie, 1987: 210). Engaging in interaction is one thing but having the quality of interactions that will steer the learner towards the narrative schemata, for example, is another. The genre approach to writing may, like the traditional approach, fall victim of criticism for prescribing what the learners should negotiate about in discussions prior to writing, but it offers an opportunity towards organizing writing for social and communicative uses.

The four approaches to writing which I have outlined, leave us in the dark as regards which one would best serve the needs of an ESL/EFL learner in Tanzania. Adopting a little from each of the approaches and suiting it to the learning environments could be the only alternative since there is no method that can claim outright efficacy and universality in use. What I regard as important is the fact that all three approaches see writing not as a mechanical act but as an interactive process. Attention will now be directed to the teaching and learning of composition writing in Tanzanian secondary schools.

### **1.9.5 The teaching and learning of composition writing in Tanzania**

Writing in secondary schools has traditionally been assumed to be an untaught skill except for a teacher's explanation of the classical format of the introduction, body and conclusion which have for long been taught as essential parts of a composition. What has been regarded as central to the mastery of a writing skill, has however, essentially been regarded to be a mastery of grammar. Correct grammar, correct spelling and correct punctuation are regarded as the cornerstone for a good composition. Moffet (1968: 169) highlights the "negligible ...even harmful" effect of grammar, particularly the overinsistence of it at the expense of use or meaning. Though grammar can be a basis for fluency, grammar used uncommunicatively, may deter the student's communicative potential. The role of grammar in writing in the Tanzania English Language syllabus can be discerned from this review of the language scheme of work (Mbunda, Brumfit, Constable, Hill 1980:321).

...a scheme of work is offered which integrates remedial structural work into a system of composition training which takes the pupils through from completely controlled work (a little more than copying exercises) to completely free writing. It is hoped to integrate the practice of correct oral patterns into the scheme of linking it to the initial representation of structural items.

The integration of grammar into the composition writing tasks is, thus, seen to go in tandem with the stages which have to be traversed before composition writing begins. The structuring of what the learner will be required to write is also implicitly laid out as can be seen in the Writing programme of Form 11 as laid out in the 1986 English Language syllabus for Form1-IV (p.38).

Table 1.1: The Writing Section of the English Language Syllabus for Form Two

TOPIC	OBJECTIVES	TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES
1. Guided compositions	The student should be able to	1. The teacher should:
a. Descriptions	1. Write a continuous text	a. Link composition exercises with structures being studied in Form 11 where appropriate e.g. reporting telephone messages (reported speech)
b. Dialogues	2. Organize ideas and paragraphs into a coherent passage	b. Provide a variety of guided compositions e.g. friendly letters, descriptions, short book reports, autobiographies, completion of dialogues or stories
c. Letters	3. Write friendly letters, descriptions, short book reports and autobiographies	c. Explain, with examples, the principles of telegram writing
d. Telephone messages	4. Report telephone messages	d. Display outstanding compositions
e. Autobiographies	5. Write telegrams	2. The student should write compositions according to given guidelines using punctuation marks and capital letters appropriately.
		3. The teacher and the students should discuss areas of weakness in students' compositions after the teacher has marked them.

The organization of classrooms for composition writing is mainly teacher-fronted and as, is shown in the scheme of work (see Table 1.1 above), if any discussion with pupils is ever done regarding compositions, then it is after the teacher has marked them. The way in which writing is set is crucial in determining not only the teacher-student relationship within the classroom but also in determining the ideas they are likely to generate and the language they use to generate those ideas. Most of the classroom topics are determined by

the teacher, which is after all justified considering the fact that the pupils may not be able at this stage to know what is appropriate for them to write on. However, there arises the danger that the topic may, after all, not be familiar to the pupil and the situation is one in which writing, as Applebee (1981:102) puts it, is "assigned in a test situation rather than an instructional one - it comes from a conceptualization of writing as a simple skill which a given student does or does not have". It is, apparently, because writing is "viewed as a technique rather than a way of learning" (Gage, 1986:24) that rather than think and reason about what they are writing, pupils tend to resort to fulfilling a prescribed format or style. There is nothing wrong in a technique that serves to guide the learners, but the technique should be taught as a means to an end rather than an end in itself. I will now attempt to show a typology of compositions which are assigned and written in secondary schools.

#### **1.9.5.1 Controlled compositions**

In secondary schools, the compositions assigned are usually "controlled", "guided" or "free". Controlled writing is a model of writing in which the teacher provides controls similar to those in pattern drills in order to make the learner attain correct forms (Paulston and Bruder 1976; Pincas). Controlled compositions are usually done as a follow up of a structure lesson and could thus be regarded as "sentence reinforcement exercises" (White 1980) since pupils tend to pay more attention to the grammatical or lexical errors they make than to the meaning generated by the passage. While it is true that the learners are supposed to grasp the language forms, the fact that undue attention is paid to grammar may obscure the importance of learners critically and logically thinking about what they write and make them only interested in the grammatical and lexical items they slot in in the blank spaces. This could be the case because controlled writing gives pupils no opportunity to organize content or find out ideas, although this would depend on how the composition has been set. Composition A (See below), in which pupils are required to provide the correct form of the present tense would probably be so hurriedly done by the pupils that they might not even bother to see the connections among the sentences in the paragraphs, whereas Composition B would make them think a bit as they are required not only to choose the appropriate lexical item but to ensure that their choice helps to establish coherence in the text.

A. Copy the following paragraph on a separate sheet of paper and use the correct form of the verb *be* in the present tense.

My name - Pablo Mendez. I - Mexican. I - from Mexico and my language- Spanish. I - 24 years old. Akio Tanaka - my friend. He - not Mexican; he - from Japan. He - Japanese. His language - not Spanish, it - Japanese. He - 23 years old.

(Taylor 1976:312)

B. Fill in the passage with words from the list below.

I went to a (1) to buy (2) presents for my (3). I have two (4), William and Walter, and two (5); Joyce and Joan. There were a lot of (6) on the shelves and I began by choosing (7) for both the boys. I know that both of them like (8). The girls are younger.

After looking at several (9) I finally bought them both (10).

(1) bookshop, toyshop (2) birthday, Christmas (3) nephews and nieces, grandchildren (4) grandsons, nephews (5) nieces, granddaughters (6) children's books, toys, (7) books, model cars (8) automobiles, adventure stories (9) picture books, toys for girls (10) dolls, books of nursery rhymes

Raimes 1983: 99-100)

Very few controlled compositions are likely to test the pupil's understanding of the subject he is writing on. A substitution table in which the pupil merely writes down sentences by replacing a syntactical item (e.g auxiliary verb is), by another or the rewriting of a paragraph from the present tense into the past tense, is unlikely to stimulate thinking on the part of the student .Raimes (1976:186) has this to say about the controlled composition failing to train students to generate ideas

Controlled composition is a misnomer. Controlled it is, but controlled it is not. The student does not invent and organize. That is done for him. He merely changes and manipulates sentences that someone else invented and organized.

I hope that Raimes is not calling for an end to assigning controlled compositions which feature prominently in ELT textbooks but is merely cautioning against the overdependence on controlled composition as a basis for teaching writing. Controlled compositions need to be structured in a way which will not make pupils merely direct their attention to structures to be slotted into blank spaces, but will make them logically relate sentences by using the lexical and syntactical structures they are given. In this way they could be prepared to write Guided compositions and the more challenging free compositions.

### **1.9.5.2 Guided compositions**

In controlled compositions, the pupils are using grammar to produce a simple written discourse of one or two paragraphs. To create a larger unit of discourse, the exercises could be turned into a passage which makes the learner "aware of the communicative potential of the language" (Widdowson 1979). Guided compositions are usually done in Form Two where it is assumed that the pupil has mastered the rudiments of controlled composition and is thus ready to write a guided composition. In such a composition, the pupil is provided with points which he has to make use of and expand in order to tell a story or to describe something. The pupil may also be given a series of questions related to a topic (e.g. The Independence Anniversary Celebrations) and is required to answer the questions in statements which will create a connected discourse. Like the controlled composition, the guided composition is prescriptive in nature and its finished product does not seem to be different from that of the controlled composition. The pupil has to use the structures properly and join the sentences cohesively in a guided composition, but simply joining sentences by accurate cohesive devices and using the correct tenses may not be enough. The problem of evaluating guided compositions has again, like the problem encountered in controlled compositions, been that teachers tend to be much more interested in the language aspect rather than the discourse organization of the text and the elaboration of content. This is because most of them think that at this level, the reinforcement needed is as regards the structures of the language rather than the organization of content which, it is often believed, has to wait until the pupil has matured linguistically. The development of thought and the development of language seem to be sadly made separable, apparently because of the nature of the written compositions which are much more language-form oriented than meaning oriented.

### **1.9.5.3 Free composition writing**

A free composition involves a much larger piece of discourse and is geared towards providing the pupil with an opportunity to freely express the ideas to the extent that he may not be able to do in either the controlled composition or guided composition. Free writing is usually done when the teachers feel that the pupils have an adequate command of the language and can express their ideas, (in Form Three or Form Four), though like the controlled composition and

the guided composition, the topics to be written on are prescribed by the teacher. The pupil is free to invent his ideas and style, though he will usually write within the allocated time and hand in his work for marking which usually involve awarding marks on tenses, spelling and punctuation, vocabulary and content and - very rarely - on style. Most of the marks usually get allocated for language use. I will comment on the written feedback shortly after reviewing the classification of compositions.

The generally held assumption in the teaching of compositions has been that free compositions should be taught after the pupil has mastered grammar, usually in Form Two or Form Three. Mastery of grammar thus becomes the criterion for composition writing. Because free compositions are usually longer than controlled compositions, the junior classes' compositions are envisaged to be of poorer quality, the latter being measured not so much by the way pupils are able to think as by the display of knowledge of target structures learned. The teacher's assumption or the assumption of syllabus designers, could be erroneous since there is more to writing than just one's proficiency in language (Taylor 1976). It is in fact because composition writing involves both linguistic skills and cognitive skills that, unlike speech, writing needs some training.

Free compositions do impose cognitive and linguistic demands on the learner as the pupil has to have both the knowledge of the subject matter as well as the knowledge of the syntax of the rhetorical structures of the composition (e.g. describing, narrating, comparing or contrasting or providing a scientific explanation). The complexity of free compositions for junior classes is consequently compounded by the arduous marking of compositions most of which teachers find incoherent, if not unreadable. What transpires in the end is that teachers will confine themselves to assigning controlled compositions or will give topics-mostly from past examination papers- which they find not to be mentally taxing to students and which are easier to mark than the free ones.

The classification and tight schedule of composition writing in the English syllabus may probably be justified on the basis of the fact that it is based on the ability of the pupils to know adequate English. However, it denies pupils who may have some competence in English to write on something they are interested in and which they might manage to write. A Form One pupil might be competent enough at his level to write a guided composition but has to wait until he reaches Form Two before he can write one. The classification is also an arbitrary one since one does not strictly learn languages in such stages, let



alone the fact that learning compositions in such an order could create boredom unless pupils are made to write all types of composition first and concentrating on writing the elementary ones (controlled and guided) if they are found to lack skills in free compositions (Pincas 1982: 23). Broughton et al (1978) regard the classification of compositions into controlled, guided and free types as rather arbitrary, if not misleading especially if you consider the fact that controlled and guided compositions could be interchangeably learnt and written depending on the nature of the task and the communicative activity that the teacher would like his pupils to engage in. Even the 'free' composition is not genuinely free as "no composition is likely to be truly free since in proposing the writing, let alone suggesting one or more topic, the teacher guides the pupils" (Broughton et al: 118-119) A balance has, therefore, to be maintained among various genres if the learner is to be provided with a variety of writing skills and register right from his early secondary school days. This can be attained by offering exercises in which the learner could be, for example describing something and at the same time contrasting or expressing his own points of view. Pincas (1982: 11) shows for instance, how in writing a personal letter, the writing skills or rhetoric would be for describing but also for comparing, and the skills involves would be to use cohesive devices (linking words) such as : both, and, but, however, on the other hand etc. I would now like to address myself to the issue of the written feedback which teachers give to compositions.

Written feedback is regarded as a permanent record which may help the learner to see the errors he makes and spur him to make improvements, though studies such as those of Cohen and Cavalcanti (1987); Cohen (1987) have shown that written feedback may have a deleterious effect as the learner may not to care about what is written in his exercise book or even get discouraged by the teacher's remarks. In their studies Cohen and Cavalcanti (1987) and Cohen (1987) found that students and teachers differed as regards what they wanted to be commented on by teachers in their compositions. Students also varied as regards preference for what they wished to be commented on, with some preferring grammar, while others wished for vocabulary and others showed a preference for content or organization of text. When the essays had been marked, some students sought the teachers' explanations and wrote in line with those explanations, while others sought explanations but did not rewrite the essays. The implication of these studies for Tanzania schools could be that because the teacher is faced with large classes and a big workload it may not be easy for him to offer comments in each and every exercise book he marks, let alone discuss it with individual students. It is impossible to point out

errors to every pupil, and it often occurs that some teachers simply put a mark without explaining what is wrong with the composition in question. Consequently, students find that they are reading comments they don't understand and may not be able to rewrite their compositions. I am not entirely against written feedback as it may be necessary for tests or examinations for instance, but there are occasions when oral feedback could be used instead so that pupils feel free and unthreatened to talk about their work. As James (1981:49) states, oral feedback could be a situation where the learners

no longer feel they're writing papers only to be collected, graded, handed back and probably thrown away without ever having contacted listening minds...writers see the effects of their work, sense the effect it could have made and experience what it is like to be in a writer audience relationship.

It is hoped a more relaxed atmosphere, coupled with writing that is geared towards meaningful communication, could go a long way towards improving the writing skill of our pupils.

### **1.10 Objectives of the Study**

This review has essentially highlighted the significance of social interaction and looked at factors in the language learning situation in Tanzania which could be said to be militating against effective classroom communication between teachers and students and among the students themselves. The review has also examined English language teaching, particularly the teaching of compositions in the context of classroom interaction and has revealed the lack of effective interaction and problem solving as regards the tasks that are assigned in writing. Writing is still regarded as a mechanical process and it is, therefore, projected that looking at writing from the social perspective and improving the social climate of learning may pave the way for improvement in learning in general and in writing in particular. Tasks that are set for language learning must be those that stimulate thinking and lead to problem solving rather than mere acquisition of grammar or vocabulary. It is assumed that the language teaching situation in Tanzania currently gives little scope for learners to engage in problem solving tasks that give students the opportunity to explore ideas. An interpretation rather than a "transmission" approach (Barnes, 1976) is therefore called for so that pupils can develop the critical and "enquiring mind" which the education system is aimed to foster.

The main purpose of the following research is, therefore, to investigate the effect(s) which the different patterns of interaction in the classroom have on different writing tasks (types of composition). The study will examine whether or not the interactional features have a bearing on the discourse, syntactical and lexical features produced in the narrative and descriptive tasks set and hence relate the interactional features to the quality of the written products.

The study is intended to answer the following questions

- (a) Will the patterns of interaction before writing affect the quality of the lexical and syntactical features of the written compositions?
- (b) Will the patterns of interaction before writing affect the quantity of the lexical and syntactical features of the written written compositions?
- (c) Will different writing tasks be affected by the learners' pattern of interaction differently?
- (d) Will the quality of the discussion affect the quality of the written composition?
- (e) Will the language generated in the discussion be observable in the written compositions and affect the written compositions accordingly?

The following hypotheses are, therefore, expected to arise from this study:

- (i) The pattern of interaction which precede writing will affect the quality of the lexical and syntactical features of the written composition
- (ii) The pattern of interaction before writing, will affect the quantity of the lexical and syntactical features of the written composition
- (iii) Different patterns of interaction will affect different writing tasks differently
- (iv) The discussion held prior to writing will somewhat affect the quality of both the written narrative and the written descriptive compositions
- (v) The language generated in the prior discussion will be observable in the written composition and affect the written composition accordingly.

It is hoped that the study will highlight the problems learners face while composing as well as the strategies they use. Teachers, administrators and curriculum developers will, therefore, see how best to help the learners, through provision of teaching materials that will enhance communication and interaction in the classroom with a view to regarding talk in the classroom as part and parcel of the learning process and a stimulus to thinking. Above all encouraging talk in the classroom might help the learners to understand that talking,

listening, reading and writing are not separate activities as they are made to be now, but do closely reinforce each other. The study is also aimed at making the teachers attempt (despite many constraints) to enhance the use of group work as a language teaching strategy with a view to encouraging the learners to engage in problem solving independently and also relieving the teacher of the burden he faces in marking exercise books of large classes. He will thus be able to help the learners with other problems more effectively. The study is also aimed at making learners respond to various writing activities in the hope that these activities will be related to the pupils' other subject areas and thus make pupils learn those subjects much more easily and meaningfully.

### **1.11 Conclusion**

This chapter began with an overview of Tanzania's language policy within the context of Tanzania's ideology of the Arusha Declaration and Education for Self-Reliance. It was deemed important to focus on the role of ideology in policy making because the goals of the society and culture, get realized through the language the people speak and write. Whether a foreign/second language such as English also gets used to realize these goals, will depend on the place of the foreign/second language in the country's way of life in general and in the school curriculum in particular. It was in view of this that the place of English in Tanzania was examined against the background of the predominant role of Kiswahili in primary school education and how primary school pupils are unable to cope with English when they are in secondary schools and hence fail to communicate and learn in school subjects.

Since communicative competence can be gauged by how teachers and students interact, the student-teacher relationship was therefore, reviewed in the context of classroom language. The way the teacher uses language in the classroom as well as how pupils use language among themselves, will very much determine how talk is organized in the classroom and whether this works to the advantage or detriment of the learners. The ability of the learners to communicate will depend, not only on the extent to which they are given turns in the classroom, but also on the content, as prescribed in the syllabus (in syllabus-centred learning contexts) as well as on the ability of the teachers to use the language to make students learn that content. This will depend on the training teachers receive and how they put the training to use. English language teaching, particularly composition writing, was then examined, with a

view to ascertaining whether or not the methodologies employed and the composition writing tasks set, are conducive to generating interaction and promoting language that might help the learners to communicate effectively. The next chapter will now be devoted to factors that contribute to the acquisition of written language. It will be devoted to some of the theories of language acquisition and their implications for learning to write.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE ACQUISITION OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE: THE SOCIAL INTERACTIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

#### **2.1 The functions of written language**

It is an indisputable fact that writing dominates the curricula of many secondary schools and occupies most of the activities learners engage in during lessons in various subjects. This is primarily because of the importance given to writing as a vehicle for expressing ideas in school subjects. With many countries' educational systems still relying on success in examinations as a measure of pupils' proficiency and as a chief criterion for selecting pupils for higher education and for jobs, writing will continue to play an important part in learning at school. The spread of technical development and the need for contact between people through commercial correspondence and the mass media, further underscores the need for learners to acquire skills for communicating particularly through writing which ensures much better than oral production that a permanent record of what has been transacted is maintained.

The functions of writing at school have to be seen within the framework of the general functions which language is supposed to perform in day to day life because schools reflect the culture of the community, and hence whatever pupils learn, they learn for the furtherance of the aims of the community in which they live. Hence I find it appropriate to give a brief account of the general functions of language before mentioning the role of written language in schools. Before doing so I will give a brief account of writing before modern times and see whether writing since then has been in consonance with the general functions of language.

##### **2.1.1 Pre-school literacy**

Since the times of early Greek civilization, written language has played a great role in transforming societies and bringing about change and development. Written language has done much to preserve the knowledge and culture of various communities and has, in this way, been a basis for a revolution of culture (Bolinger and Sears 1981:273). The information stored in books and other documents in every society is an embodiment of the transmission of the culture of that society from generation to generation. This has been the case in

'literate' societies, but even in 'non-literate' societies knowledge was stored not necessarily in books, but in other forms as in Peru where forms of record like the *quipu* began to appear. Wells (1990) explains how in ancient Egypt literacy was manifested in symbols which appeared on vessels which could then be easily identified as containing oil, wine or grain. The invention of the Greek alphabet led to further transformation of thought and written language then became better suited than speech in serving the recording needs of the society (Olson 1977). Although customs and traditions could still be preserved through oral stories and proverbs, a written text remained the better repository, as it was the medium through which records could be preserved permanently, and was thus preferred to speech by chiefs and rulers as the medium in which "the meaning and authority are displaced from the intentions of the speaker and lodged " (Olson 1977:81). That could explain why the written word was regarded with awe by those who could not read because it was in the written word that authority was embodied. This also serves to explain why education for a few is feared as the empowering of the elite who could use their power to subjugate those who do not possess education.

The disadvantage of the transitory nature of spoken discourse is underscored by Goody and Watt (1972) who give an example of Chief Jakpa of the Gonja people of Northern Ghana who is allegedly said to have had seven children but, who after the arrival of the British colonialists, was said to have had only five. He was thus deprived of the authority he could have bequeathed to his children because of lack of a written record. This example contrasts with the situation which had before then obtained in the ancient Kingdoms of Egypt, Sumeria and China where writing systems already greatly helped to preserve the kingdoms' civilizations and technology. Wells (1981); Greenfield (1972); and Scribner and Cole (1988) posit that literacy has been a tool for cognitive development in the so-called 'pre-literate' societies.

Scribner and Cole (1988) provide an interesting and comprehensive account of the Vai people of Liberia who developed a phonic writing system the use of which was unrelated to formal schooling, but which helped those who knew it to solve problems such as playing a board game and other problem solving activities for which they could apply their knowledge of the Vai script. The Vai are able to preserve their history and culture and carry out commercial transactions through the phonic writing system. What is interesting, however, is the way they can solve problems using the script. Scribner and Cole (1988) administered a problem solving task involving explaining how to play a board

game to those who knew the Vai script but had not attended a formal (Western) school education, and those who neither knew Vai nor had attended formal school. They also administered the test to secondary school students attending formal (Western) school education. The authors report that there was no difference between the Vai literates who had had no contact with formal education and the secondary school students who had formal schooling. Furthermore, the Vai literates were better at comprehending and repeating than Arabic literates who were seen to be competent at memorization, apparently because rote learning is characteristic of Quoranic school learning. Vai literates with advanced skill also performed better than those with beginning skills thus demonstrating that the more one knew the script the better was the ability to solve a problem. Scribner and Cole (1988) were thus able to show that the Vai people, despite having no exposure to formal (Western ) literacy, were able to make use of the Vai script and that their Western educated peers were no better than they in carrying out the tasks. This shows that in societies whose economic and cultural activities continue to be based on oral communication, writing will serve a variety of important functions.

Greenfield (1972) carried out a study of the Wolof of Senegal among subjects who could only speak a local language but not write and among those who could both speak and write and found that the latter were better able to solve tasks requiring abstract thought. He concluded that because oral language relies on context for the communication of messages, it may not be so well suited to learning since oral language is tied up with "context-dependent thought which in turn is the opposite of abstract thought" (p. 169)

The studies by Scribner and Cole (1988) and Greenfield (1972) are a testimony to the fact that however "uneducated" a community is, as long as they have their own form of literacy and hence way of expressing propositions and interacting with text by using scripts or symbols which represent thought in a higher order form than speaking, that community is likely to engage in activities which will enable them to employ high level cognitive skills. The only problem I envisage is to what extent that form of literacy is able to meet the demands of the changes in a modern society if its form of literacy remains undeveloped for years. Having shown how even 'uneducated' societies have been able to engage in cognitive skills using written language, I am now going to relate the use of written language to school contexts. I will first pay attention to the general functions of language.



### **2.1.2 The communicative/interpersonal and conceptual/ideational functions of written language**

The functions of language have attracted so much attention that the proliferation of terms for the same word or idea could, if one does not pay much attention, cause confusion. A word referring to the way language is used to establish rapport in social contexts for example, is described variously as "phatic" (Jakobson 1960); "interpersonal" (Halliday 1975); and "communicative" (Widdowson 1980). The fact that there have been many words to try and explain what the functions of language are, is itself a manifestation of the interest that the subject has aroused. Halliday (1975) regards the functions of language as interpersonal, ideational and textual. The ideational function relates to the individual's experiences of the environment while the interpersonal function relates to expressing one's feeling or judgment. The textual function is seen as the uniting of the two in the sense that it relates to organizing what is stated in the ideational and the interpersonal into an oral or written text. Jakobson (1960) describes the ideational function and the interpersonal function as referential and phatic functions respectively, and it appears that the poetic function alluded to by Jakobson is analogous to Halliday's textual function as it relates to the organization of a message. Halliday offers other sub-categories like the instrumental and the regulatory functions, the later of which was called "conative" by Jakobson since it is a function meant to control other individuals' behaviour. Halliday's sub-categories can be said to be complementary and simultaneous rather than oppositional since it is very likely that while interacting with a person one could at the same time be trying to influence him and regulate his behaviour and that this could be done through expressing one's personal feelings such as sympathy or disgust as well as by presenting him with 'facts' through the ideational dimension. I would like to dwell a bit on Halliday's sub-categories of language learning since they cast some light on the child's development of language and how he uses the language functionally.

#### **2.1.2.1 Halliday's functional sub-categories of language learning**

The Halliday's model of the child's learning of language provides one of the social views of language which is tied to how the child uses the language in his environment. Halliday(1975) posits that the child learns a language first by learning about the environment even before he has learnt the lexical items for naming things in that environment. He states that although he may not have the

lexical repertoire, the fact that he needs the language with which to do things for himself or to get objects from his mother or peers, necessitates his using other devices during infancy to realize his needs. During this stage of "protolanguage" the child will engage in vocalizations (e.g. babbling) which could be accompanied by pointing at objects or showing as a way of labelling, his objects (Ninio and Bruner 1978). The vocalization stage is usually devoid of lexico-grammar. To qualify as a language, the protolanguage has to be systematically and functionally organized. It must be systematically organized to make meaning and thus conform to the grammar of a language which is what makes *homo sapiens* different from other animals, and the language must be directed towards attaining certain objective functions. These functions are what constitute the ideational aspect which is about the speaker's experience of his environment and his consciousness, the interpersonal function which is about the speaker's attitude judgment and feelings and finally the textual function or what Halliday (1975) calls the "enabling function" since it is a language function that makes it possible to operationalize the ideational and the interpersonal and realizes the meanings created in those two components meaningfully. The seven sub-functions of language given by Halliday are the *instrumental* designed to secure the child's needs; the *regulatory* function for controlling the child's behaviour as well as enabling the child to control the behaviour of others; the *interactional* function for the child's interacting with others; the *personal* aspect for expressing one's self awareness ; the *imaginative* which pertains to the child's consciousness of his own environment and the *informative* when the child makes intrinsic use of the language.

Halliday (1975) sees the second function of language (the regulatory), characterized by grammar and dialogue, as crucial to the child's learning since at this stage, the child is expected to have mastered the linguistic system of the language. The dialogue the child engages in can be said to help the child if the child is assisted to engage in monologues and hence to start talking independently. In this example, the child through the adult's questioning prompts, and recounting, is able to take advantage of the adult's previous utterances to reconstruct another meaning.

(H has spent a day with M)  
 F: Where did you go today?  
 H: To beach  
 F: What did you do?  
 H: (Silence)  
 M: Did you get wet?

M: Yes, girl got all wet too.Crying  
(Painter 1986:74 )

The underlined words constitute the child's metalanguage in the sense that the child is not only talking about getting wet but is also learning the word wet. The opportunity afforded him by the prompts also leads him to state the fact that a girl also got wet and was crying. Halliday (1975) asserts that at this stage the child is capable of exploiting the system of the language, though some words he uses may be confined to one function only as the child's use of the word "cup" for "I want a cup" or "There is a cup". It is anticipated that at the end of this phase, the child will learn not only the language but also the culture in which the language gets encoded. The child may, for instance in touching an electric wire, be told, "Don't touch that" or he may be told to always remember to greet elders whenever he goes into a house. The lexis and grammar thus serves to enable the child to make meanings which derive from different functions, but also become a socializing agent and an effective channel of the child's participation in his culture. As Halliday (1975:36) puts it

Language can now serve him as an effective means of cultural transmission, as a means whereby in the ordinary everyday interaction in which he himself takes part the essential meanings of the culture can be transmitted to him. The culture is itself a semiotic system, a system of meanings or information that is encoded in the behaviour potential of the members, including their verbal potential - that is their linguistic system

It would, therefore, seem that the language in which the child is well disposed to learn the culture is his first language, since this is the language with which he first learns to obtain his needs and to get acquainted with the environment around him. Only when he has mastered his first language, can the child be expected to appreciate the culture associated with his second language. It is argued further by Halliday (1975) that when the child has mastered the principles of grammar and dialogue, he will have made a transition to the adult language system, a transition which requires two "zones of meaning potential", one ideational as it is concerned mainly with the learning of a language and the other interpersonal as it is concerned with language for social action. Three main things do, therefore, seem to emerge from the child's learning of a language. In interacting with an adult the child is learning how to jointly construct meaning. The child is also learning a language incorporated in the talk (a metalanguage). Furthermore in engaging in interactions with an adult, the child is learning about the discourse structures of his culture.

In his analysis of the functions of language as they bear on written discourse, Widdowson (1980 :237)) points out that the conceptual or ideational function of language is closely tied up with semantic meaning or "the conceptual signification of sentences" while the communicative or interpersonal function is tied up with pragmatic meaning or "the communicative value of utterances". The conceptual is concerned with the creation of propositions while the communicative dimension is concerned with transmitting these propositions. He thus posits that this process of creating and conveying propositions is mediated by discourse. Apparently, although both speech and writing create propositions, it would appear that in writing the conceptual aspect is better placed than the communicative to create abstract concepts, greatly valued in packaging information. This is because in writing one has to contend with the absence of a social context and has thus to strive to be as concise and as explicit as possible. At the elementary stages, the communicative dimension may predominate because at that stage communication is virtually achieved through speech. Later, the communicative dimension gives way to the conceptual as the learner attains the "zone of proximal development" postulated by Vygotsky (1978) and is able to solve problems using the conceptual dimension and hence exploit the written language. Though by no means superior, the conceptual dimension is well placed to make learners produce their own meaning (Wells 1981a) because writing enables one to encode meaning more explicitly and elaborately. It is this which makes Widdowson regard the writing of a text as involving "expansion" and the reading of a text as involving "reduction," since in reading one simply makes one's interpretation or rephrases what he has read. As Widdowson (1980:242) points out:

in writing expansion provides the means whereby the conceptual function can come to terms with the communicative and in reading reduction provides the means whereby the communicative function can come to terms with the conceptual.

In reading the reader realizes meaning in another form whereas in writing the writer faces the arduous task of creating meaning which involves knowledge of what he wants to create, knowledge of the discourse and linguistic knowledge. Unless reading is presented in graphic form it remains the property of the author. Even putting it in graphic form has to ensure that one does not depart from the author's original ideas unless one is writing a book review and would like to project his own line of thinking. Green (1988:166) reveals this power of written narrative vis-a-vis reading for creating meaning thus:

In the case of reading one's meaning making (and hence one's construction of text) is framed by a pre-existent text, which is being read. At least some of the cognitive work involved in meaning is structured by something that already exists. This is not the case with writing. The writing does not have a pre-existent frame of reference in the same tangible way that the reader does. In a quite specific sense, in writing one is generating a frame of reference, or context, as one goes along. Hence, there is arguably more cognitive work involved in writing in that one is originating text and increasingly taking responsibility for the generation of context.

The transforming of "school knowledge" into "action knowledge" advocated by Barnes (1976) as a critical way of viewing the cognitive aspect of education would seem, therefore, to be more effectively effected in writing activities because even though pupils can vividly express propositions in speech, writing is the only way they can reformulate them in a way that the school regards as acceptable if the learner is to show that he knows a subject.

Attention will now be focused on the interpersonal/communicative and ideational functions of language and subsequently how these are realized in classroom contexts particularly in writing in Tanzanian secondary schools. It is worth pointing out before then that there are two aspects of the Hallidaian functional approach which may be deemed to have some relevance to writing. One is the age or stage at which we think that the child is able to construct meanings and the other concerns the construction of meaning through real-life experience which is germane to the culture of a writer.

#### **2.1.2.2 The interpersonal/communicative functions of written language**

Britton, Burgess, Martin, McLeod and Rosen (1975) offer probably one of the most coherent classifications of writing. They classify written language into the transactional, expressive and poetic modes. The transactional aspect pertains to the aspect of writing intended to convey information or display one's competence as in writing to present an argument. The expressive mode of writing aims at catering for the writer's feelings or self-expression and is incidentally the mode of writing done by primary school children and whose register is akin to the register of primary school reading books since the discourse of the expressive mode approximates that of speech. Although expressive writing could also serve as transactional if the writer intends his personal expression of feelings to influence events or change behaviour, the former is distinguished from the latter in the sense that it involves higher order

thinking and would, therefore, be said to be germane to the academic writing done in schools. Expressive writing can be the domain of both school writing as well as writing that is done outside school. The poetic mode of writing appears in Britton et al's category towards the end of the spectrum - with the expressive range in the middle - and is the type of writing in which one assumes "a spectator role" (Britton et al 1975) as he merely evaluates or assesses rather than directly participates. In a story or poem one recounts what happened and is in a way uninvolved since he lets the characters (the participants) play the participant's role. He could be expressing his distaste or prejudice through his characters but it is his characters who are the participants and, I would gather, his readers with whom he interacts. Expressive writing seems to be tailored to the communicative aspect of writing. It mediates the oral discourse and the written discourse and can, thus be said to predominate in narratives in which one's narration of events departs from the norm of conventional writing so as to create effects on the readers. The writing of personal letters, for instance could be regarded as serving interpersonal communicative purposes since in personal letters, the writers rarely engage in displaying abstract thought but simply express their feelings or emotions. In Tanzanian secondary schools, the writing of personal letters is done during the second year. It is usually offered in Guided composition writing in which though the writer is able to connect sentences in paragraphs to construct a piece of discourse, his freedom to express feelings is curtailed by the guidance provided by the teacher's instructions. Many teachers thus favour expressive writing because it is probably the easiest to write as most of the children already have a story schemata acquired from their homes. While expressive writing is undoubtedly geared towards the child's personal development, writing for communicative purposes may fail to prepare children for the more challenging transactional writing used in school subjects. Transactional writing makes children learn how to create meaning, and it would be unproductive, therefore, to delay making children engage in conceptual writing such as simple argumentative compositions or factual writing on subjects they are aware of or on topics from other subject areas. Sheeran and Barnes (1991:90) underscore this point when they state that

The writing curriculum in English lessons is thus failing to help pupils to 'interrogate the world', to take a critical and inquiring attitude to the life about them, mainly because of its concentration upon the ideal knowledge provided by literature. Not only that; most of the writing done in schools is essentially contemplative, it narrates, describes, analyses and explains, not only in English but in other subjects too.

Yet in the World outside school, most writing is concerned to make something happen, to influence or to plan or to set up a critique.

The types of writing done in Tanzanian secondary schools will now be examined in the light of the conceptual/ideational functions of language.

### **2.1.2.3 The conceptual /ideational function of written language**

Much of the writing that takes place in schools is conceptual because of the demands made by school subjects on pupils to express in writing opinions, give examples or elaborate points. Summary writing assigned in English lessons is, for instance, deemed to help learners take down notes in other subjects where pupils have to list ideas, organize them and paraphrase the information without at the same time distorting it. This reductionist approach gives way to expansion when the pupils are told to write a composition, since this will involve them analyzing the points or putting them together and expanding them. The conceptual aspect of writing, therefore, involves topics requiring reasoning, for which instructions are usually provided e.g. 'Write on the advantages and disadvantages of studying in boarding schools.' Unlike the communicative, the conceptual aspect can, if properly conducted, use a great many discourse and linguistic features since the learners write on varied subject areas. I will now attempt to illustrate how these functions are realized in composition writing in Tanzanian secondary schools. I will try to confine myself to writing done at Form Two Level, the level on which this study is based.

The nature of the writing done in the junior classes of secondary school approximates what Britton et al (1975) have sub-categorized as "informative", and falls under the banner of the Transactional category and is also of the Expressive type involving narrating personal experiences (e.g. An accident I witnessed). This particular transactional sub-category is a low-level one as it does not involve critical organization of ideas but merely involves a chronological arrangement of points given and minor coordination of ideas. The description of an object or character is usually assigned in guided compositions. Usually a task is set and corresponding points are given under it. The pupils are expected to follow the sequence of these points and use cohesive devices (e.g. conjunctions) to join them logically. Alternatively, questions may be set and the student is expected to write a coherent composition by answering the questions. The following example from the National Form Two Examination (Tanzania) of 1986 (see Appendix Z) may serve to illustrate this:

## SECTION C

Write a composition about your school. Use the following points in your composition.

- . name of your school
- . day or boarding
- . government or private
- . where it is (region or district)
- . the nearest town (if it is in a town say so )
- . buildings (new or old, clean or dirty)
- . how many forms (1-4 or 1-6)
- . many or a few teachers?
- . name of headmaster or headmistress
- . do you like your school? Why?

In this composition , the learner is expected to arrange the points in a coherent discourse and explain about the school. The problem is usually that pupils may simply make short statements in answer to these questions without forming a coherent connection of ideas. Consequently, the paragraphs written will consist of a mere list of statements, thus making the composition monotonous. The pupils' preoccupation with short fragments will make pupils fail to realize for example, that such points as the name of a school; whether the school is day or boarding ; whether it is a government or a private school need to constitute a paragraph and that the last two questions, "do you like your school? Why?" probably need a separate paragraph as they seem to conclude the composition. The composition is structurally and lexically controlled, since the pupil is supposed to write in the present tense and use locative/existential and prepositional/adverbial forms. It appears, however, that the pupil has been provided with the main lexical items needed to describe his school and that he may after all, not need more. The pupil is provided with the words "new or old; clean or dirty; 1-4 or 1-6"; and is thus not given the chance to learn that if something is not clean it is dirty.

Another form of Transactional writing which could be said to develop pupils' concepts, is the writing that takes place in other subjects. Regrettably, this form of writing has no place in the English language syllabus and is seen to be the preserve of the subject teachers. A pupil who is required to write on 'Cotton growing' by an English teacher is expected not only to use English properly but also to display his knowledge of the subject. If the child has not learnt about



cotton growing in a Geography lesson the likelihood is that he will avoid writing on the subject. Furthermore, there is diversity in the attitudes of teachers towards marking a composition on that subject. The Geography teacher may hardly be interested in the language errors and only pay attention to the concepts, while the English teacher may not care whether the pupil explains accurately about how cotton is grown and harvested or describes the commercial benefits derived from cotton as long as the pupil writes the composition in good English. There is thus very little writing in English classes that can be said to promote conceptual development.

The emphasis on English narrative compositions and descriptive compositions in lower forms of secondary schools could be one of the reasons for their poor writing in other subjects which require a different cognitive ability and rhetorical organization. It is not enough for example, for a pupil to know that he needs to know how to organize his Chemistry essay into the four main parts: Aim, Method, Results and Conclusion if he does not know whether he needs to use personal or impersonal language, active voice or passive voice constructions let alone the proper discourse which would differentiate his essay from a personal letter. I think it is, therefore, appropriate at this juncture to explain the functions of written language in Tanzanian secondary schools.

### **2.1.3 The functions of written language in the classroom context: Implications for teaching in Tanzanian secondary schools**

I have pointed out elsewhere in this chapter that literacy is bound up in the culture of a society and in fact becomes inseparable from other facets that make up the culture of that society. The educational goals of the society will, therefore, go a long way towards shaping the functions of language and affect even the writing of that society (Vahapassi 1982). Writing becomes the instrument for transmitting the ideology of a culture and the content of what pupils write at school is usually made to reflect that ideology. There are those who may argue that insisting on writing that reflects the ideology of a community may deprive the pupil of individuality and personal development so much claimed to be fostered by expressive writing and poetic writing. I would argue that since the pupil is part of the culture, what he writes cannot be easily freed from the trappings of its ideology. A balance has to be struck between assigning topics that pertain to appreciating the society's ideology and those that may enhance the individual's personality. In Figure 2.1 below, it is seen that the educational goals impinge on classroom writing tasks which are themselves not

independent of the general functions of language. The setting up of objectives for writing as well as the content that implements those objectives have thus to consider what the society puts forward as objectives for writing, apart from writing in order to learn, which is obvious, and at the same time ensure that the objectives do not deviate from the general objectives for language learning. The setting of a writing programme is thus dictated by both pedagogical and political considerations.

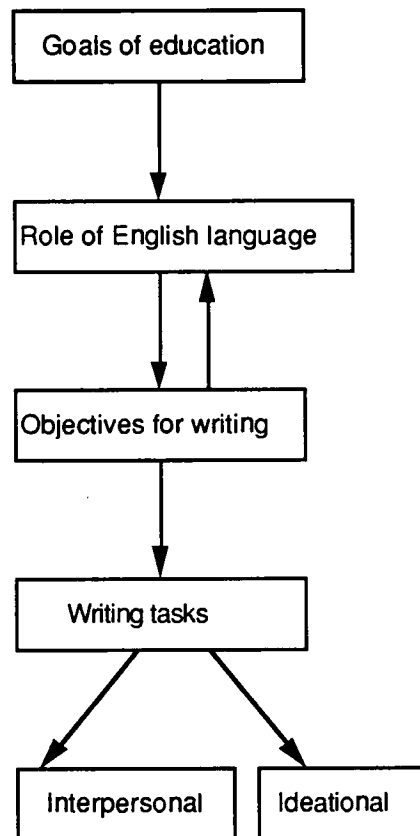


Fig. 2.1 Relationship between goals of education and writing in schools.

Florio and Clarke (1982) propose the following as the functions of written language in schools: writing to participate in a community; writing to know oneself and others; writing to occupy one's time and writing to demonstrate one's competence. These general aims may be interpreted and carried out differently. Writing to participate in a community may be interpreted by two countries differently depending on how those countries prepare the youth to participate in their communities. The aims also tend to overlap and are not mutually exclusive since one may be seen by some to be writing to demonstrate his academic prowess while other people may see him as writing for his

emotional satisfaction.. Bereiter (1980), interested in the cognitive role of composition writing, posits three types of writing: *associative* writing which relates to the expression of one's thought and is, therefore akin to Britton et al's expressive mode, *performative* writing and *epistemic* writing. Performative writing is involved with skills of knowledge such as the writing of reports or minutes of writing, and epistemic writing "represents the culmination of writing development" (p.88) since it is the writing that is regarded as an integral part of one's thinking. Academic writing would thus tend to fall under this category since in academic writing, the writing programme is incorporated into the subject or topic being learned and is not seen as a separate entity. The epistemic mode would thus tend to involve the register and discourse of various subject area and the transfer of that knowledge to other activities. In the subject English language Literature or Literature in English could provide an example of an epistemic mode of writing since in Literature or Literature in English, it is not enough for the learner to know the contents of a set book but he has also to employ language to express the contents in writing. His knowledge of discourse and various features of language such as metaphor and simile may help to create effect in his text. In writing in English lessons in secondary school, compositions tend to realize a combination of both the associative mode and the performative mode, with the epistemic mode being a common feature in high schools or universities.

Pupils write bearing in mind that what is important are the points they make and accurate tenses and spellings and punctuation but little attention is given to the cognitive aspect at this level. Writing at the Junior secondary level is, as Applebee (1982:370) observed of American secondary schools, very much "writing without composing" as it involves fill-in the blank exercises in grammar lessons and in controlled compositions. The only writing that goes beyond the sentence is guided writing which controls the learners to make use of points given in the exercise. The "imaginative uses of writing" conceived of by Applebee as stories, poems and plays seem to be in the realm of Literature or get integrated into the language course in the final year of secondary school.

I will now pay some attention to the role of oracy (speaking and listening) in the pupils' acquisition of writing skills. I regard this as important since secondary schools in Tanzania write few English compositions but those in primary schools hardly write any. They usually fill in blanks or rewrite simple English sentences. Their main preoccupation with English in the classroom is therefore, mainly listening to the teacher and repeating what he says or uttering a few

sentences themselves. Looking into the impact the oral aspect of language has on their writing could help to cast some light on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of oral language in developing writing. We may also be able to learn whether or not those children who are lucky enough to have literate parents who teach them to read and write in Kiswahili (with very few being lucky enough to be taught English at home) are able to use the skills they have acquired in writing in either Kiswahili or English to write English compositions at school.

## **2.2 The place of oracy in literacy learning: focus on the acquisition of writing skills**

Any attempt to elucidate the place of oracy in learning has first got to focus on the notion of social interaction as a basis for the acquisition of language. To do so justifiably, requires delving into the theories of language acquisition which preceded the social interactional theories of language learning so as to have an understanding of the reasons why the social interaction theories may be ideally relevant to the acquisition of writing skills. I will attempt to do this outlining, first, the behaviourist theories of learning, and later, the nativist theories of learning with particular focus on the acquisition of language before tackling the topical subject of oracy.

### **2.2.1 The Behaviourist approach to language learning**

Before the Social Interactionist Approach came to the language learning scene, two dominant approaches to language learning were already in existence and played a great part in influencing the language teaching methodologies that prevailed for two decades from the 1950s. The two approaches were the Behaviourist approach whose chief proponent was Skinner (1957) and the Nativist Approach based on the work of Chomsky (1965).

Central to the behaviourist conception of language learning is the fact that the stimuli for learning and the response towards those stimuli are received and generated by the learner and form the basis of learning. According to Skinner, human behaviour is dependent on stimuli. A response to the stimuli is triggered and reinforcement will check whether the response was appropriate or inappropriate. In a language learning situation the stimulus might be a question, the response would be the learner's reaction or response to the question and the teacher's approval or disapproval of the response would be the reinforcement. Reinforcement is vital to ensure that behaviour, particularly

behaviour that is approved by the teacher, becomes habitual. Reward in the form of reinforcement rather than any feature of the environment or of social interaction, is all that counts in shaping the learner's learning process. Skinner's concept is thus a mechanistic one and tends to regard the learner as a passive organism waiting to be moulded by external forces. To Skinner (1950: 199) learning is "a change in probability of response" and is likely to take place only because the reinforcement is pleasant, satisfying and tension reducing. While these attributes of learning would be acceptable even to modern theorists of language acquisition, the problem is that the reinforcement envisaged has to come from the teacher and so the learner's success in learning is almost entirely dependent on the teacher's whims. Among the chief critics of the behaviourist theories has been Chomsky. I will point out his chief criticism after pointing out the implications of the behaviourist theories to language learning and composition writing.

#### **2.2.1.1 Implications of the behaviourist approach to composition writing**

The language teaching approach that is closely identified with Skinner's behaviourist approach to learning, is the audio-lingual approach which was prevalent in the mid-sixties but which saw its decline in the sixties following some criticisms. Richards and Rodgers (1986) provide a comprehensive account of the history and implications of the audio-lingual method which consigned language learning to a process of mechanical habit formation. The implications of Skinner's theory for composition writing can be seen within the context of the audio-lingual method's insistence on the teaching of oral skills and grammar. The audio-lingual method laid primacy on the teaching of oral skills (pronunciation) and played down writing which was done late after the teacher had been satisfied that enough had been done to drill the children in speech and grammar. Writing then becomes purely imitative and consists of little more than copying out of sentences that have been practised during the grammar lesson. As the students gain proficiency in the language, they are then expected to practise short compositions usually with the help of short questions (guided compositions) before they are ready to write free compositions. Among the principles governing the audio-lingual approaches were the following:

- 1 Foreign language learning is basically a process of mechanical habit formation. Good habits are formed by giving correct responses rather than by making mistakes. By memorizing dialogues and performing pattern drills

the chances of producing mistakes are minimized. Language is verbal behaviour - that is, the automatic production and comprehension of utterances - and can be learned by inducing students to do likewise.

2. Language skills are learned more effectively if the items to be learned in the target language are presented in spoken form before they are seen in written form. Aural-oral training is needed to provide the foundation for the development of other language skills (Rivers 1964:19-22, quoted by Richards and Rodgers 1986). In his criticism of the behaviourist, Ellis (1985: 128) states that to the behaviourist

...the availability of suitable stimuli is an important determining factor in SLA. Behaviourist theories emphasize the need to regulate the stimuli by grading the input into a series of steps, so that each step constitutes the right level of difficulty for the level that the learner has reached. Feedback serves two purposes. It indicates when the L2 utterances produced by the learner are correct and so *reinforces* them, and it also indicates when the utterances are ill formed by *correcting* them. The regulation of the stimuli and the provision of feedback shape the learning that takes place and lead to the formation of habits.

The learner is thus viewed as "a passive recipient of the environmental pressures much like a malleable piece of clay" (Bohannon and Warren-Leubecker 1985:180) with no role to play in language behaviour or development. The child is seen as a mere imitator of the adult's speech and hence the success of the learner depends chiefly on how frequently and strongly the adult is able to provide models to the learner. The behaviourist views seem, therefore, to leave the learner to the whims of the adult who may decide the rate at which the learner should acquire the language as well as what he thinks the learner should acquire. The child's imitation of the adult's language input is congruent with the lock-step approach to the learning of grammar and writing which entails the child repeating the teacher's words or sentences, though the behaviourist believe that the child is able, after imitating the teacher, to substitute his own words which are appropriate to the context. Reinforcement is achieved by rewards, apparently through the teacher's oral praise and in the case of composition writing, by encouraging remarks, or by punishment. In the case of parents teaching their babies to talk, reinforcement would tend to be realized by the mother either responding positively to the child if the latter produces the right utterances or responding negatively by ignoring the child's utterances. The behaviourist approach thus minimizes the role of interaction in language learning.

I have pointed out that under the audio-lingual approach, writing is dependent on the learner's proficiency in the oral skills of the target language attained through listening comprehension and pronunciation practice - intonation, stress and rhythm. The language skills -speaking, listening, reading and writing are seen as discrete with the last two capable of being attained when the first two are accomplished and mistakes are promptly corrected. Drill patterns are envisaged to be mastered by repetition of utterances, word substitution, restatement, word completion, expansion and transposition. The following example (Richards and Rodgers 1986:54) illustrates how the learning was controlled by the teacher and did not focus on things that the teacher might have thought the child was familiar with. In this example, the student rephrases an utterance and addresses it to someone else in the classroom according to the teacher's instructions.

#### EXAMPLES.

Tell him to wait for you. - Wait for me.

Ask her how old she is.- How old are you?

Ask John when he began.- John, when did you begin?

The sentences to be repeated may be related to something which is neither within the context of the child's home environment nor that of the classroom and they might (as is seen above) not form a connected discourse that the child can remember though the teacher may not pay much heed to that as long as he achieves his target of getting the habit taken up by the learners. As Richards and Rodgers (1986: 56) underscore the point

The fact that in the early stages learners do not always understand the meaning of what they are repeating is not perceived as a drawback, for by listening to the teacher, imitating accurately, and responding to and performing controlled tasks they are learning a new form of verbal behaviour.

The fact that the behavioral approach to language learning and the attendant audio-lingual approach made the learning of language skills mechanistic has already been adumbrated. In relation to that is the fact that since the audio-lingual approach concentrates on the pupils' attaining proper behaviour by not making mistakes, pupils can advance from controlled to guided composition only if they do not make mistakes in their writing. Thus only those who do not make many mistakes can be rewarded and go on to the next stage. The insistence that pupils should not make mistakes is also often coupled with the fact that they should not resort to the mother-tongue when discussing their compositions (if a discussion is ever held) or writing for fear of language

'interference'. This basically means that the audio-lingual approach denies the learners the opportunity to use their mother tongue to explore meanings and seems interested only in making them produce accurate language forms. One of the great critics of the audio-lingual approach is Noam Chomsky. The main criticism made by Chomsky centres on his regarding language not as a habit structure but as rule governed behaviour giving rise to innovations and patterns in accordance with the intricacy of the language rules. Chomsky argues that language cannot be learned like other forms of learning as the behaviourist claimed, because sentences, of which any language is constituted, cannot be imitated but have to be generated from the learner's underlying competence which, he claimed, is innate. Disenchantment with some aspects of the behaviourist views led Chomsky (1965) to come up with other views which tended to hinge to some extent on the learner's linguistic environment rather than mere behaviour.

### **2.2.2 The Nativist Approach: Chomskian views**

The Nativist approach as propounded by Chomsky (1965) is sometimes known as the Mentalistic approach because of its insistence that the learner's ability to learn a language can be attributed to his innate mental ability in a particular linguistic environment. The learner's internal mechanism is seen by Chomsky as affecting and being affected by the linguistic input the learner gets. According to Chomsky (1965) human beings are genetically endowed with a highly specific language faculty and all children irrespective of race, are born with an ability for learning a language. The capacity for language is programmed in a component of the brain which Chomsky calls the Language Acquisition Device (LAD). Innate universal grammar is, according to Chomsky, encoded in the LAD which enables the child to perceive the grammaticality or acceptability of an utterance or a sentence. The LAD incorporates knowledge of rules that relate sound and meaning in a particular way. The role of the child is relegated to merely learning and internalizing the rules for a particular language as the child matures and the role of the environment is to trigger the LAD rather than to shape and train verbal behaviour. It was on the basis of man's ability to learn languages that Chomsky (1965) made his severe criticisms against Skinner's (1957) *Verbal Behavior*. Chomsky's main criticism was that language is not simply a set of habits and that it is vastly different from animal communication which does not really constitute a language because animals do not have the vocal apparatus and generative capability that man possesses let alone the main fact that man possess a grammar of a language.



Chomsky asserts that language is human specific. He therefore envisages that it is wrong to place man's success or failure to learn language on the same behavioral basis as rats or pigeons learning to obtain food. Lyons (1977:140) in his review of Chomsky's contributions to language learning repeats and supports this criticism made by Chomsky.

He has made a strong, and to my mind convincing, case against behaviorism (in its extreme form at least); and he has argued, again cogently, that the gap between human language and systems of human communication is such that it cannot be bridged by any obvious extension of current psychological theories of 'learning' based on laboratory experiments with animals.

A child possesses a tacit knowledge of the deep structure of the language and is thus said to have innate syntactic competence. Chomsky (1965) challenging the behaviourist' views on language, posits that the child does not passively wait for any external reinforcement but is a dynamic learner who attempts to deduce and hypothesize about language around him. The grammar the child learns is said to be a dynamic one and capable of reacting to a variety of situations and the child is said to be endowed with creativity to learn. Chomsky asserts that the child, or generally man's potential to learn a language, is illustrated by man's ability to learn any unfamiliar language. However, Chomsky's concern seems to be with what the learner knows about the grammar rather than what he can do with it, a fact which has earned Chomsky critics who assert that he seems to be concerned only with the learner's learning of a language rather than what he can do with it. In other words, Chomsky (1965) is concerned with linguistic competence rather than linguistic performance. As he puts it himself:

When we speak of a grammar as generating a sentence with a certain structural description, we mean simply that the grammar assigns this structural description to the sentence. When we say that a sentence has a certain derivation with respect to a particular generative grammar, we say nothing about how the speaker or hearer might proceed in some practical or efficient way, to construct such a derivation. These questions belong to the theory of language use - the theory of performance.

One of the greatest critics of Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence is Hymes (1972), who is sharply critical of Chomsky (1965) for seeing the individual who acquires a language as divorced from his socio-cultural forces. Hymes (1972) also argues that linguistic competence varies across language situations as well as across cultures. A person may be competent in language

use in the office, but lack the same competence and express himself poorly while shopping or attending a traditional ritual. To Hymes (1972) communicative competence and communicative performance are different.

Linguistic competence is understood as concerned with the tacit knowledge of language structure, that is, knowledge that is commonly not conscious or available for spontaneous report, but necessarily implicit in what the (ideal) speaker-listener can say. The primary task of theory is to provide for an explicit account of such knowledge especially in relation to the innate structure on which it must depend. It is in terms of such knowledge that one can produce and understand an infinite set of sentences, and that language can be spoken of as 'creative' as *energia*. Linguistic performance is most explicitly understood as concerned with processes often termed encoding and decoding.

To Hymes (1972) the place of language in the communicative context is what would determine to what extent it is competently used and not just a set of language rules that do not consider the use to which they are put.

There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless. Just as rules of syntax can control aspects of phonology, and just as semantic rules perhaps control aspects of syntax, so rules of speech acts enter as controlling factors for linguistic form as a whole (Hymes 1972:278)

What Hymes (1972) is trying to put forward here is thus the fact that there are other factors besides grammar such as the way one employs speech acts in communicative situations, which may reveal linguistic competence and that the learning of transformational generative grammar for instance, has to be seen within the framework of the grammar's role in communicative functions.

One of the controversial notions put forward by Chomsky (1965) was the fact that because the language input which the child receives from its mother is "meagre and degenerate" and comprises elliptic sentences and sometimes incomplete words, its internalization by the child must be remarkably facilitated. Mother's input is thus seen by Chomsky to be a supplement to the child's LAD. Chomsky's view seems to have been triggered by his preoccupation with grammar as the basis on which the child's competence (not performance!) would be based. This view was to be challenged, albeit a decade later, by proponents of the social interactionist approach who saw Chomsky as demeaning not only the significance of language within the context of use rather than in terms of mere grammatical competence, but also the vital role which the interaction provided by the child's mother or care-taker, had on the

child's language development and behaviour. One of the critics of Chomsky's notion of the child's mother's "meagre and degenerate" language input was Labov (1972) who challenged this assertion by showing evidence from his study that 75% of the utterances he observed parents making to their children were very grammatical and that dysfluencies such as stammering and false starts, for instance, were compensated for by ellipsis and corrections, thus making the speech addressed to children well-formed and an aid to communication. Bruner (1975) also challenges Chomsky (1965) for addressing himself too much towards the formal aspect of language and paying little attention to the support ("scaffolding") which mothers provide children during their early stages of language development. Bruner (1975); Snow (1977; 1983); and McLaughlin (1979) show how mothers are able to modify their speech to their infants so as not only to maintain communication with them but also to interact socially with them. Snow (1977) states that the mother is able to simplify her speech to the child by such measures as: mean length of utterances and incidences of subordinate clauses which tend to be of low frequency, redundancy as reflected in type-token ratios and in incidence of repetitions of utterances and phonological simplifications. Snow (1977) also states that the questions mothers address to their children are "tutorial"(e.g What colour is it?) and the mother-child conversation is reciprocal and attuned to "here and now " events rather than to hypothetical things the child is unlikely to do or encounter. The mother-child interactive discourse and linguistic simplifications provided by the mother, form the basis of the success of mother-child interaction for promoting the child's language development. As McLaughlin (1979: 6) quoting Snow (1972); Snow and Ferguson 1977) states

Mothers and other caretakers develop a special lexicon when talking to young children; they usually restrict their speech to refer to objects in the immediate here and now; they modify their speech patterns , using a higher overall pitch, often with a rising intonation at the end of sentences. Their speech is shorter and more precise; there are more instances of emphatic stress. They repeat utterances frequently and expand and elaborate on what it is the child has said. There are grammatical modifications...fewer verbs, modifiers, conjunctions and prepositions; there is less use of third person construction, passive voice. and other more complicated constructions... in speech addressed to young children as compared to speech addressed to older children or adults.

### **2.2.2.1 Implications of Chomskian views for writing**

It may at first appear difficult to relate Chomsky's views on language learning to composition writing because Chomsky (1965) seems to be preoccupied with

rules of grammar. However, I think that there is something to be gained from both Chomsky's concept of competence and the later criticisms of Chomsky's views which gave birth to a more functional approach to language learning (Halliday 1975; Hymes 1972; Widdowson 1978). Drawing on the views of communicative competence, I would say that the teaching of composition writing can start from the learner's knowledge of grammar and expose the learner to meaningful use of the grammar for conveying meaning so that the learner knows how to transform his competence in grammar into performance in writing. The assigning of controlled compositions which basically make the learner draw on the knowledge gained from the learning of structures is thus a step forward towards more meaningful writing, provided a balance is maintained between learning language forms and learning how to communicate.

### **2.2.3 The Socio-cognitive and the Socio-interactionist approach**

The views provided by proponents of the social interactionist theories lend support to the vital role played by speaking as the mode children and mothers engage in while interacting in language learning. The primacy of speech for learning has been stressed by both Piaget (1959) and Vygotsky (1962; 1978) though the extent to which speech is employed has been a point of difference between them, since Piaget regards cognition as central to the child's language development while for Vygotsky (1978), learning through interaction seems to be pivotal to learning. The next section of this chapter will, therefore, be concerned with the role of oracy in promoting language in general and writing in particular.

#### **2.2.3.1 From speech to writing: the role of interaction in literacy**

The last two decades have witnessed an increasing interest in and research on the role of speech or talk in the development of literacy. Before then writing was seen as a mechanical process that would be carried out in class more thoughtfully in sombre silence and a process that came after enough seemed to have been accomplished in listening and reading. These were the skills that employed talking substantially and hence it was envisaged that acquiring competence in them would be a step towards reading and writing. Serious consideration of the place of composition writing in English and other subjects gave an impetus to viewing writing not as a mere manipulation of one's linguistic repertoire to express ideas, but a part of the cognitive and social process which is what writing really is. The varied interests of psychologists,

psycholinguists, sociologists and educationalists has played a great role in unravelling writing as a linguistic, cognitive and social process. It is widely acknowledged that the writer does not rely only on his knowledge of grammar to write but has to think out logically what to write. He has to ensure that what he writes is going to be understood by his readers, and hence in that context he can be seen to be interacting not only with his text but also with his readers. He can easily do this by silently deliberating on what to write which he thinks will be understood and perhaps appreciated before putting pen to paper. A young child, however, needs initially to speak and probably also draw the thing he wants to represent. The ability to talk, revealed in explaining something or telling a story thus constitutes the first step towards knowing how to read or write during childhood in many societies.

The ability of children to engage in talk and listen to peers has for many years been a subject of interest because the ability of children to articulate can be taken as a sign of cognitive development and could determine the child's potential ability at school. So much is now known about the value of speaking in aiding reading that speaking and writing are now seen as reciprocal literacy processes. Before reviewing some of the studies which have looked into the relationship between oracy and writing, there is a need to look into how children put speech to use. Oracy is the first linguistic skill the child engages in even before he goes to school. Speech thus initially serves mainly an instrumental function as well as an interactional one (Halliday 1975) as it enables the child to make his needs known to his mother and enables him to interact with his mother and other objects within his environment. Only at school does the child employ language to serve functions that make him learn or discover things and relate them to his experiences at home (ideational function), though at nursery school, one would be inclined to regard the child's language as mainly interactional as he is unable to put it to use to formulate abstract propositions or relate what he sees to his experiences at home.

Studies related to the role of oracy in child development and child language learning in particular, have been of basically two kinds. Some of these studies have looked at the differences between the child's oral language at home and at school with a view to ascertaining whether or not the style of mother-child interactions and teacher- child interactions could be held to account for the difference between how a child learns at home and at school (Wells 1978; 1985; Barnes, Gutfreund, Satterly and Wells 1981; Snow 1983; Tizard and Hughes 1984), whereas others have tried to explore how the child is capable of

exploiting oral language to create written products at school (Dyson 1983; Graves 1983; Wolf and Dickinson 1985; Blazer 1986).

The seminal contributions of Wells (1978; 1985; Snow 1983; Tizard and Hughes 1984) regarding the interactional patterns used at home and at school have helped to throw some light on the fact that the style of communication between teachers and children at school rather than the often cited home background, may be held to account for school failure. They argue that all children come to school with language picked up from home and that the difference between middle class children and working class children may be of degree rather than substance, since middle class children may surpass working class children only because the former may have been exposed to literate material (books, magazines, pictures etc.) and may have received from their parents language input which approximates that of the school. They argue that since school learning is "decontextualized" (Snow 1983) learning stripped of activities that are germane to the child's experience at home, working class children, who have not been exposed to such learning before, will be at a disadvantage.

The other aspect of the contribution of oral language to reading and writing has been as regards how the reading which children do from objects they see around them (e.g. advertisements) makes it easy for them to talk and relate them to school reading and writing (Britton 1983; Dyson 1983; Teale 1984; Tizard and Hughes 1984). Alongside the objects children see around them are drawings children make to represent symbols and which become the first stages by which the child's messages get encoded. Since these activities are usually done under the supervision or guidance of a mother or adult, pre-school literacy is very social and interactive in nature. I will now attempt to elucidate the psychological and psycholinguistic theories put forward by Piaget and Vygotsky who have greatly contributed to theories regarding the cognitive and social aspect of language learning, and relate them to the learning of writing.

## **2.2.4 Social interaction and the acquisition of written language: Piagetian and Vygotskian cognitive and social views**

### **2.2.4.1 Piagetian views**

Piaget (1969) is well known for his theories of child development as regards the stages of mental development. However, he has also contributed substantially

to our knowledge on language and thought. According to Piaget, a child is not born with a tabula rasa (a blank sheet of mind) but is well predisposed towards learning through action and that although his schemata may not be as complex as that of an adult, it is anticipated that they will develop as the child matures and learns from his environment. Central to Piaget's conceptions are self-discovery and the child's stages of growth and their relevance to learning. Piaget postulates four factors as central to this growth or development. The four factors are : maturation; experience with the physical environment; social experience; and equilibration or self-regulation. According to Piaget maturation or genetic development greatly helps mental functions, and language development can only be seen within the framework of mental development. The latter is seen to develop in four phases: the sensori-motor stage (0-2 years); the pre-operational stage (2-7 years); the concrete operational stage (7-12 years) and the stage of formal operations (12 years and older).

The sensorimotor stage is a stage when the child gets interested in objects around him and is able to distinguish between himself and these objects. It is also a stage at which the child is able to imitate his elders. The pre-operational stage is the stage when the child becomes imaginative and no longer relies on motor activities as in the previous stage. At this stage he is able to attach names to objects he sees around him but he is still egocentric as "his reasoning is dominated by what he perceives" (Hyde 1970:26). Piaget refers to this stage as a period of imitative thought since the child's reasoning is not yet developed. Speech is still assimilated but the child accommodates himself to the environment through increased contact with his environment. A profound transformation of the concrete operation stage is marked by the development of logical thinking and the mastery of language. Piaget claims that at this stage the child is able to draw conclusions and make hypotheses. The fourth and final stage is the stage of hypothetico-deductive thinking which is enhanced through the child's socialization with the environment.

One of the important occurrences during the child's growth is the development of the cognitive structures for processing, storing and retrieving input called schemata or mental representations of knowledge. Neisser (1976) quoted by Harste, Woodward and Burke (1984:90) defines a schema as

that portion of the entire perceptual circle which is internal to the perceiver, modifiable by experience and somehow specific to what is being perceived. The schema accepts information as it becomes available at sensory surfaces and is changed by that information; it

directs movements and exploratory activities that make more information available, by which it is further modified.

Piaget believes that the child's learning occurs through schemata. However, he seems to differ from other schema theorists in that whereas Piaget sees the development of schemata as genetically endowed, schema theorists see schemata as influenced largely by experience and accumulated prior knowledge. It is this view which makes schema theorists posit that both children and adults, because they have similar schemata, exploit schemata to conceptualize things in the same way. The difference could be one of degree because adults have much more accumulated experience than children. I would argue, however, that what matters could be what aspects of a schema gets utilized in solving a problem. Carrell (1987) for instance, envisages that in reading or writing the pupil has two kinds of schemata at his disposal, the *content* schema which is about the content or subject matter being read or being written about and the *formal* schema which is about the language and the rhetorical organization of a text. It is conceivable that a child could have a well structured content schema and have a poorly structured formal schema as is often the case with many EFL learners who are unable to use language to encode the information they write. A clear balance has thus got to be maintained between content schema and formal schema. The question of genre has also got to be considered since it is very likely that an adult may have a schema of persuasive writing because of his developed sense of sustaining arguments but may not be so good with the narrative genre just as the child could have a well developed narrative genre and fail, especially at the early stages of learning, to write a persuasive composition because of the cognitive demands entailed by the nature of the composition. The learning of genres

represents the child's socialization into appropriate and accepted modes of organizing knowledge, of knowing and the modes of representing perceptions and knowledge of others (Kress 1982: p.124)

The child's schemata have thus got to be seen within the context of the subject matter he is talking about or writing on, the language forms he is likely to use to present the content as well as the genre with which the child is familiar or unfamiliar. Writing needs to be considered as a second representation of thought, after the child's exposure to symbols (e.g pictures) and other things which he finds easy to relate to concepts, which may be rather abstract to the child and thus difficult. The meaning of a text arises in interaction between the message and the reader's existing message (Anderson 1980). The existing



message may be what the writer is likely to remember most either because it is interesting or because it is easy. Perhaps what is common among adults and children is the fact that they all have to devise the same strategies to organize the information needed to explain something and probably experience the same difficulty in presenting it coherently and what differs among them would be the degree of complexity of the task they are faced with. To the child, therefore, writing is a cognitive burden.

Piaget's other contribution to education is as regards the child's egocentrism or inability to take the perspective of others especially during the early years. According to Piaget (1969) the child's speech or conversation falls into two groups: the *egocentric* and the *socialized*, the former being characteristic of pre-school talk. At the age of 7 or 8, the child is able to work with others, egocentric talk subsides and becomes an instrument of thought. Egocentric thought becomes a transition between vocal speech and inner speech. Vygotsky (1962) while agreeing about the disappearance of the vocal aspect of speech states that it is not eliminated but merely internalized as the child begins to think in words. Piaget (1969:20) states that until seven years of age

children surely know how to have discussions among themselves but confine themselves to making contradictory affirmations. When they try to furnish explanations to others, they are not yet really able to put themselves in the place of the other person, who does not know what they are talking about; they speak as though they were talking to themselves. For example, while working in the same or at the same table, each child speaks for himself even though he thinks he is listening to and understands the others. This kind of 'collective monologue' is really a mutual exitation to action rather than a real exchange of ideas. The same characteristics are found in children's collective games. In a game of marbles, for example, older children submit to certain rules and adjust their individual games to those of others, whereas young children play for themselves without bothering about the rules of their playmates.

Piaget (1969) argues that it is only as he begins to grow up that the child is capable of thinking beyond himself or to decenter. Decentration may be more noticeable in speaking than in writing because the child is still used to the physical presence of peers and cannot easily cope during the first years of learning to write because of the lack of a physical context in writing. Maturation per se is thus not adequate. It has to be accompanied by social interaction that enables the child to see the environment within the context of those who are around him. The social experience is expected to increase as the child matures. However, Piaget tends to lay primacy on the child's intellectual development

and regards it as separable from the social experience. Learning is, according to Piaget, channelled into the human mind through the process of assimilation and accommodation. The latter involves creating a schema or pattern of behaviour that guides one to respond, however instructively, to some stimuli. Accommodation, on the other hand involves adapting the child to an environment such as training a child to pick up a spoon while eating. Piaget classifies these mental processes on the basis of the concrete operational or pre-operational stage when the child internalizes objects as a symbolic activity, as when the child plays with a cardboard box and conceives of it as a vehicle, and the formal- operational period when the child is able to think creatively. Piaget thus links acquisition to cognitive development and does not seem to consider social variables as likely to impinge on the child's stages of development. However, he acknowledges that these stages constitute a continuum with consistent shifting along the range of the continuum apparently depending on the child's mental state or the environment.

Piaget believes that the ability to maintain cognitive control can be achieved through the restructuring of the child's internal reasoning processes and is thus dependent on the extent to which the child is able to get involved in actions that promote his reasoning. Although Piaget does not rule out the impact of social interaction in promoting reasoning, it is apparent that to him social interaction is secondary and a consequence of cognitive development. The child's initial contact with the environment may be through vocalization or gestures but it is primarily through speech that he begins to articulate his needs and to influence the behaviour of others. Speech which at first, is interpersonal and oriented towards getting things done for the child (e.g getting food or picking up a toy), later becomes a principal means of regulating the child's behaviour. It is on this basis that Piaget sees speech as vital to learning. However, Piaget sees articulated speech as eventually becoming inactive as the child matures and relies much more on mental reasoning. Piaget (1959:14) argues that the child's egocentric thought stands midway between 'autism' and socialized thought and that though it is found in pre-school talk, it disappears between the age of seven and eight when the child begins to interact with peers. As he puts it:

After seven or eight when socialized thinking begins to take shape, the egocentric features do not necessarily vanish. They disappear from the child's perceptual operations but remain crystallized in the abstract area of verbal thought

An attempt will now be made to ascertain Piaget's contribution to language learning and particularly writing within the context of the child's schematic knowledge and the child's egocentricity.

#### **2.2.4.1.1 The implications of Piaget's view on schematic knowledge for writing**

The knowledge and experience that learners bring to a text has an impact on their perception and recall of words, sentences and paragraphs when they are reading but it also has an impact on what they write. The learner's familiarity with a topic and relating it with what he sees around him or what he hears from his peers or from elders will very much determine how easy or how difficult he is going to find it when writing. If the child finds that the information he has provides him with an opportunity to start the first paragraph with ease, then it is likely that the content of his composition as well as the ending will come easily and be made coherent to the other parts. Flower and Hayes (1980) and Stein (1986) posit three stages in composition writing: the *planning stage*, the *translation stage* and the *reviewing stage*. (See 1.8.3 above) The planning stage is the stage when information one has either from some other source or through survey and research is integrated with the writer's knowledge and long term memory. The translation stage is the stage when the knowledge based schema is integrated with the linguistic knowledge in order to encode the information. The reviewing stage involves reading, editing and reorganizing the information before finally writing it down. The three stages are not linear in form since one may be planning what to write and at the same time exploiting language to encode what he plans. While reviewing he could go again to reorganize the information by crossing out ideas he regards to be wrong or unclear and substituting for them new ideas that re-emerge in his schemata. This is particularly so with elementary EFL writers who tend to plan, go back to the aid of a dictionary or ask their colleagues or teachers whether the words they have used are appropriate or not and go back to planning again. Stein (1986: 231) conceives of the planning stage as particularly crucial in so far as the schema is concerned. He argues that if the learners are to write appropriately for an intended audience this can only happen when

writers have constructed some type of meaningful representation for themselves. Frequently, the initial act of writing serves as a retrieval mechanism for accessing highly organized information in a rapid automatic fashion and examining it for its meaning and appropriateness.

To have the "meaningful representation" may require more than knowing the language to use in writing. It requires knowing the discourse in which one operates, and knowing the subject domain one is writing about so as to equip oneself with the appropriate register to use. The knowledge of the culture of one's audience may also be crucial since the genre of writing will be dictated by among others, the language forms that are appropriate in one situation rather than in another as well as by the manner in which the audience is to be addressed. The assumption that children usually come mainly with a narrative schema and not other forms of schema is beginning to be challenged (Stein 1986) since children can be said to be engaged in some forms of argument and to talk about other issues that are beyond story telling.

The implications of schemata to writing should be seen within two perspectives. One is the fact that the schematic knowledge with which children come to school is often constrained by the cognitive and linguistic demands of school subjects. Teachers should, therefore expose pupils to other fields of knowledge related to school subjects and other genres children are going to find useful and interesting in their lives. The second is the fact that it may not be appropriate to assume that children come to school equipped only with a good grasp of story schema just as it may not be true to believe that children come to school without any idea of what writing is whichever society they come from. Shickedanz (1982) and Harste, Woodward and Burke (1984) for example draw their conclusions from studies conducted on handwriting among children of different nationalities, to show that the writing of children across cultures is the same. They show how all children start writing with up down strokes and that these strokes later become linear or circular depending on the writing system of the child's environment. It is, therefore, important that teachers should first ascertain what knowledge or ability pupils come with to school before introducing something new to them so as to find out what and how pupils are able to integrate new knowledge with their existing knowledge. Since children tend to recall things that they see around them first before those which are explained to them, it would be a good idea if pictorial compositions were to precede other forms of composition. Teachers can afterwards give pupils controlled, guided and free compositions and later expose them to other genres or provide them with some freedom to write on what they know or find interesting.

#### **2.2.4.1.2 Piaget's views on egocentricity and their implications for the writer's awareness of audience**

The impact of the sense of audience on writing has been a subject of interest because of the egocentric behaviour which children are said to possess and which makes them unable to write with consideration of the needs and interests of those for whom the message is intended. The writer's audience may be real when he is writing about something real he sees around him or it may be imagined as when he is told to write imagining himself to be in somebody's position. On the other hand the sense of audience is not a one-sided perspective. It is a reciprocal process involving some form of "implicit pact" (Bonk 1990:142) between the writer and the reader. Whereas the writer has got to imagine what the reader's interests and needs as well as linguistic ability are, the reader needs to fulfill the pact with the writer by trying as much as possible to understand the writer without distorting what he says, though this does not necessarily mean that he has to agree with the views of the writer. It is in this respect that audience awareness is an interactive process between the writer and the reader and a process that could be a prerequisite for the writer's communicative competence. The writer has to reorganize the information that he has constructed for his audience and edit it.

Since audience awareness is a covert interactive process, it means that the real or imagined audience with whom the writer interacts could be crucial in determining the way the writer organizes his thoughts and language to express propositions. It also means that an understanding of how close or distant the writer is to the audience as well as an understanding of the culture of the audience, will very much determine the message the writer encodes. Failure to understand the reader's culture may lead to an inappropriate stance on the part of the writer and the reader's displeasure with the writer. It might also lead to the writer being linguistically constrained in order to present information in as accurate words as possible so as to be understood, something which might curtail the reader's confidence in him as a good writer. A number of studies have been carried out to ascertain the impact which audience awareness could have on the writer's quality of composition (Crowhurst and Piche 1979; Rubin 1982; 1984; and Cohen and Riel 1989). These studies show variations in terms of variables tested but the two significant variables are the interaction between the writer's age and the genre and between the nature of the task and the writer's performance.

Crowhurst and Piche (1979) in their study found that students in the tenth grade varied their syntactic complexity on the basis of whether the audience was a teacher or the best friend and on the basis of whether the task was a narrative composition or a descriptive or argumentative composition. Rubin (1982) assigned writing tasks that required students to write to intimate audiences and to interpersonally remote audiences and scored the quality of the tasks on the basis of the number of words, clause length, subordination and the proportion of conjunctions and adverbial clauses notably because, and so that. The result of the study showed that clause length and fluency increased with age. Mature writers exhibited more logical and varied adverbial constructions. Longer clauses were associated with interpersonally remote audiences rather than intimate audience. The argument given by Rubin (1982) is that when considering an intimate audience, the writer spends less energy in manipulating syntax due to interpersonal relations. Interpersonal relations could lead to the writer employing loose language forms such as simple short sentences and even colloquial words to get the message across since he is acquainted with the reader which is not possible with an impersonal or distant audience with whom the reader does not share common interests or ideas. With a distant audience it is the quality of the text and how it is presented that will determine how easy or how difficult it is for the reader to make meaning out of a text. Rubin (1984) further argues that subordination is a less complex method of expressing ideas and requires less energy on the part of the writer though the reader may have to expend much cognitive and linguistic effort to decode it. Rubin (1984) in saying this may have in mind L1 writers since L2/FL writers experience difficulty in employing subordination features and usually resort to coordination features, especially the use of additive conjunctions: and, so, and also., in joining ideas in sentences. In another study Cohen and Riel (1989) showed that children showed more attention to audience, writing purpose and genre in their self-sponsored writing than in the classroom assigned tasks. In this study, subjects were told to write to their teacher as part of an examination and later to write to peers of other countries. The papers were then marked on the basis of content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. The papers written to peers scored higher than those written as an examination. The language used for peers of other countries was more effective and incorporated more complex constructions and had less subject-verb agreement errors than those written with the teacher as audience in mind. Furthermore, students who wrote for distant peers were more explicit than those writing for the teacher apparently because they knew that students from those

countries did not share their background knowledge. The students used less slang and fewer colloquial expressions when writing for peers. It was found on the other hand, that writing directed to the teacher was often similar to the oral account of events, each providing some new information without really building a structure of ideas to be conveyed.

The views presented on the writer's audience awareness are worth commenting on. In the first place, it may not be entirely true to state that it is the egocentric nature of pupils that makes them fail to write well. Britton et al (1975) Rosen (1972/73) and Rosen and Rosen (1973) point out that by assigning tasks, the teacher virtually makes himself the pupils' audience. While it is possible for the teacher to assign topics relating to distant and unknown audiences, it may not be possible for pupils to ignore the teacher altogether as the audience in a situation where course work and examinations determine the pupil's success or failure. In such a situation the teacher becomes

an audience on whom pupils must focus a special kind of scrutiny in order to detect what they must do to satisfy him. Indeed the writer is frequently placed in the position of telling the reader what he already knows fully and more deeply. (Rosen 1972/73:181)

Even when group work is assigned and pupils take the perspectives of their colleagues, they are still likely not to forget that the teacher or the examining board is the ultimate decision maker of the quality of their written products. In this respect, their writing, in whichever social context it is carried out, will be somewhat affected by the teacher as the audience. On the other hand, planning what to write with the reader's interest in mind may not be all that easy especially for elementary writers who have to contend with the problem of generating ideas and the problem of finding the appropriate language features to encode those ideas. It is equally true that even among experienced writers, it may not be easy to place oneself in the reader's perspective. While it may be easy to know who the intended audience is, it may not be as easy to predict who the real audience will be as readers with whom the writer does not share ideas are likely to read his work and find that it is not suited to their tastes. Moreover, an awareness of audience in one genre may not necessarily lead to an awareness of audience in another. The requirement of the knowledge of various genres will still place cognitive and linguistic demands on the writer.

Britton et al (1975) in their typology of writing, see expressive writing as centering on the writer's interests and feelings. I would think that expressive writing is likely to be compromised by insisting on the child's awareness of

audience whenever he writes, and might prevent pupils from using language and ideas to express their feelings. Persuasive writing (argumentative compositions) could also be adversely affected since young writers may be so wary of not writing to the taste and needs of their intended audience that they may lack the literary style required for writing arguments. I also envisage that the need for knowledge of audience may be felt much more in one genre than in another. In writing letters for example, it may be necessary to know the status and social relationship between the reader and the writer. A business letter written to a person whom the writer knows could begin with the salutation Dear Mr. Juma or Dear Juma and end with Yours sincerely whereas one addressed to a not too intimate client would begin with the more formal Dear Sir and end with Yours faithfully. The contents of the letters bearing different salutations and different endings would also differ just as would their language features. In narrative writing, knowledge of audience may not be all that necessary since it is known that people of all walks of life can identify a good story from a bad one.

An awareness of the needs, and interests as well as language ability of the audience for whom one is writing has implications for writing. One of these is the fact that teachers have to consider assigning different tasks that will make learners aware of adjusting to the different demands of their readers. Since most of the writers, especially at an elementary stage, tend to write to please the teacher, reduced teacher control may go a long way towards helping pupils to address themselves to the needs of unknown audiences. This could be achieved by making pupils write in groups and allowing them to read what they have written out aloud to each other so as to get used to not only reading but also listening to written language which seems to be frequently - if not all the time - read only by the teacher when marking it. This may mean that the teacher should reduce the amount of corrections he makes so that he can help pupils in reading and commenting on their own work. This could help to lessen the student's fear that it is the teacher who will always read pupils' work and assess it. The status and power of the teacher is likely to make learners consider first what the teacher will think of what they might write before they can consider who else is likely to read their work and the appropriate style it should assume, as exemplified by this part of an extract from Rosen and Rosen (1973:139) about a boy who is describing an experiment involving the use of a spring balance.

When the cube was one inch long the volume was one cubic inch and the surface area six square inches so the surface area was six times as big as the volume. When the cube was two inches long the volume



was eight cubic inches and the surface area was twenty- four square inches then the surface area was three times as big. When the cube was three inches long the volume was twenty-seven cubic inches and the surface area was fifty- four square inches so this time the surface area was only twice as big as the volume.

Although the child who wrote the above paragraph may be intending to provide information to the general reader, it is most obvious that he is writing for the teacher who knows something about the cube. Writing for a larger audience can be done in a situation where the writing is related to what takes place in the pupil's community or the school or it could be about a factory or a national project. Ideologically, this sort of task is likely to bring close contact between the school and the community around the school making the school a microcosm of the culture of the society while educationally and linguistically, it means that pupils are able to learn from what they perceive around them and come up with new words rather than confine themselves to classroom books. Wallace (1989) in her analysis of reading and writing that makes teachers and learners share experience and learn from each other, states that both teachers and learners may have something to share and learn when learners bring to the classroom what they have collected or written about from the environment around them and make it a basis on which they can ask each other questions and finally write about it. Drawing on Freire's (1972) approach to functional adult literacy, Wallace (1989) states that literacy (reading and writing) can be carried out in a socio-cultural context that makes the learner a dynamic rather than passive recipient of the teacher's knowledge. As she states:

a participatory approach at classroom level will involve many decisions being taken jointly about what goes on in the classroom; it will involve an interpretation view of learning rather than a banking or consuming model; it will involve a view of texts, whether produced by learners or others as open to interpretation. And most importantly, it will involve an exchange of learner and teacher roles (Wallace 1989: 7)

One of the problems of learner-centredness which is what the "participatory approach" seems to be basically about, is the fact that learners left to their own devices could learn errors if they are not competent enough to guide one another let alone the fact that young learners could engage in off-task behaviour and not learn effectively. The role that language projects or collective tasks play in language learning may need to be clearly marked since the balance between learning language and writing the task/project, and hence literally the balance between fluency and accuracy, could be tilted towards the contents rather than the learning of the language.

In the studies reviewed on the writer's sense of audience, it has been pointed out that the difference in age affects the way the writer conceives of his audience and consequently the language he uses. This means that teachers need to expose learners to subjects or genres that they are familiar with, although a start could be made right from the beginning to familiarize the pupils with all types of genres ensuring that the difficult genres such as expository or argumentative compositions are offered in as simple a form as possible. This brings me to another aspect of Piaget's views on the child's development which can also be related to language learning and writing. This aspect concerns Piaget's stages of development. During the concrete operational stage for instance, we may expect the child to combine simple sentences without making sense out of them but as he reaches the formal operation stage, it is anticipated that he may be able to not only use conjunctions to join ideas but he may be able to express ideas and show the link between one idea and another. This could be the stage when he begins to compose as it is the period when vocalization has given way to the inner speech which is evidenced by the child's ability to express ideas in writing. A relationship is thus established between oral language which represents the child's thoughts and the writing which covertly represents the inner speech realized in written form. This relationship can also be attained through talk preceding writing when thoughts, words and actual meanings put on paper mediate to express the pupil's propositions. Pupils may also read out what they have written down thus reinforcing the relationship between reading skills and writing skills (Pappas and Brown 1988). It needs to be noted that the pupils with whom the present study is concerned ought to have reached the fourth stage of Piaget's developmental ladder but to the extent that pupils range along the developmental continuum much of the above discussion may still be relevant

Piaget's views have contributed to educational development as much as they have aroused controversy. The most authoritative contributions to Piaget's theories on learning have been those of the Soviet psychologist and psycholinguist, Vygotsky, whose views, apparently inspired by Marxist philosophy, have greatly contributed to filling a gap in Piaget's theories particularly as regards the social interactional perspective of learning. I will now attempt to highlight these theories and how they differ from or complement those of Piaget and finally relate Vygotsky's views to the teaching and learning of writing.

#### **2.2.4.2 The Vygotskian Approach to language acquisition and writing**

Vygotsky, spurred on by the Marxist philosophy which subjects the individual to the will of the collective whole, has given to language a social perspective that seems to be lacking in Piaget's theories. The three fundamental issues in Vygotsky's contributions to which I will address myself are social interaction, the concept of cognitive conflict and the role of speech in language development.

While Vygotsky complements Piaget's views on cognition as instrumental to the child's development, he regards social interaction as primary. Whereas in Piaget's views, development is the key to learning, in Vygotsky's views social interaction is the *sine qua non*. Piaget (1970) asserts that the fact that social interaction always plays a role in promoting learning is "enough to show that the stages follow the same sequential order in any environment" (p.721). This may seem a rather over-optimistic assertion since it is quite possible that learning may take place in an environment in which social interaction is not at all promoted as in lock-step language drill exercises where the teacher controls the interaction, contrary to situations where both the learner and the pupil are jointly managing the interaction (Allwright 1984). Vygotsky thus complements rather than opposes Piaget, though to Vygotsky it is learning that precedes development and not vice versa. As Vygotsky (1978:90) puts it

learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement.

One of the developmental processes that ensue when the child is interacting with his peers, has been what Piaget calls "cognitive conflict" which Vygotsky calls "cooperation". Piaget simply sees a cognitive conflict as emanating when learners are trying to solve a task about which they may initially have to disagree before they reach a consensus. It is significant in this respect to note that Piaget did not conceive of cooperation between a child and an adult, and hence he seems to obscure any assumption that children themselves are likely to reach a solution. Vygotsky, on the other hand, sees problem solving as essentially involving a child and an adult and states that an adult should help the child to solve the problem first before the child is able to solve it himself. Implicitly, the 'adult' in this case need not necessarily be a person who is older than the child but could be a colleague who is more competent. Vygotsky (1978

:86) calls the stage between the adult's help and the child's solving of a problem "the zone of proximal development", this being "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and level of potential development as determined through problem solving under direct guidance in collaboration with more capable peers". Thus guidance by both parents and teachers before the child reaches maturation becomes important. As for teachers, guidance or providing models for students to write compositions might be appropriate when what is assigned to pupils is beyond their experience or needs further focusing before the pupil can write on his own. Forman and Cazden (1985:343) see the difference between Piaget's and Vygotsky's views on problem solving between peers in terms of the centrality of "cognitive conflict" when they substantiate with data from their study based on children's solving of a task requiring combining chemicals, that mutual cooperation rather than cognitive conflict is instrumental in problem solving.

The Vygotskian perspective enables us to see that collaborative tasks requiring data generation, planning, and management can provide another set of valuable experiences for children. In these tasks, a common set of assumptions, procedures and information needs to be constructed. These tasks require children to integrate their conflicting task conceptions into a mutual plan. One way to achieve a shared task perspective is to assume complementary problem-solving roles. Then each child learns to use speech to guide the actions of her or his partners and, in turn, to be guided by the partner's speech. Exposure to this form of regulation can enable children to master difficult problems together before they are capable of solving them alone. More importantly, experience with social forms of regulation can provide children with just the tools they need to master problems on their own.

It has been sometimes alleged that collaborative learning sometimes obscures the essence of individual personality as it fails to take into account the fact that an individual has to show his intellectual potential. This is often the case in situations where the learner's performance is assessed, not through group assignments but through examinations in which each individual's performance counts.

Both Piaget and Vygotsky allow scope for the development of the individual, though the latter emphasizes the learner's temporary surrender to the collective whole and the need for assistance from an adult or "more capable peer", should a need arise before the task is completed. Central to the question of maintaining individuality, Vygotsky (1962) sees the individual as "regulated" on

three dimensions: the object regulation, the other regulation and self-regulation. According to Vygotsky (1962) an individual is object regulated when he is directly controlled by his environment. In the classroom, the way desks are arranged for learning as well as the number of pupils in the classroom is a situation that may determine the way a class is controlled. In this context the teacher and the teacher's language, together with the tasks that the learners have to do, may be said to be "the other regulation". On the other hand, when the learner is able to "self-regulate" himself he is able to control his own learning. Controlling one's learning is one thing and using an opportunity to learn effectively is another. However, when the pupil, through talk, is able to learn with his peers, he can be said to be "self-regulated". The organizing of pair work/group work and the setting of tasks that promote discovery learning, can be said to be contributive to the self-regulatory aspect of learning. Pallincsar and Brown (1989:41)) have this to say about the self-regulated learner:

The self-regulated learner possesses and is able to use, in a flexible way, three types of knowledge: (1) knowledge of strategies as heuristics that enable one to accomplish learning tasks efficiently; (2) knowledge of one's own learner characteristics as well as knowledge of the task demands one confronts, often called metacognition; and (3) knowledge of the content or the factual knowledge that one possesses about specific domains as well as the world.

Pair work and group work can be regarded as ideal for promoting self-regulated learning since in pair work and group work, learners are able to make inferences and relate what they are trying to solve to their own experiences. All the three "regulation" aspects hinge on speech, for it is through speech that the child's thinking develops. Both Piaget and Vygotsky realize the primacy of speech. They only differ as regards the ultimate role of speech in the child. Vygotsky (1962:26) regards speech as pivotal to whatever the child does from infancy as it enables children "to acquire the capacity to be both the subjects and objects of their own behaviour". Apparently, speech does not stand to accomplish everything. The environment in which the learner's actions are carried out as well as the nature of the task the child is exposed to, will determine how successfully or unsuccessfully speech is put to use. If the learner does a task which is beyond his ability or one which he does not understand as it does not match his experiences and schema of knowledge, it is obvious that the child may fail to engage in problem solving. I will come back to this point later when I mention the relevance of language learning tasks in writing as I would like first to mention other metalinguistic aspects of Vygotsky's

theories which I regard as germane to writing. These aspects are activities that involve play and drawing which are said to supplement speech in aiding learning.

#### **2.2.4.2.1 Vygotsky and Pre-school literacy symbolism: Drawing and Play as bases for the acquisition of writing**

Drawing and playing are predominant social activities associated with learning although they may not be found to be common in places where schools lack resources for children's play. In such situations drawing and playing do not have a place in the school curriculum and are only done by pupils themselves during recreation. It may therefore not be surprising to note that drawing and play have in such situations been regarded as distractions to learning. In secondary schools such activities rarely get attention and are regarded as natural talents though it is true that in any local environment it is easy to have access to play materials such as tins or clay. The fact that schools rarely expose their pupils to drawing materials may make the appreciation of drawing as a learning activity a far dream. Drawing is regarded as a metalinguistic preparation for learning to write (Britton 1983; Clark 1984; Dyson 1983; Graves 1979) and Vygotsky (1978) regards it as a first step to literacy ("first order symbolism") since to attain the stage of writing the child moves "from drawing of things to drawing of words" (p.115).

The role of play in education is widely acclaimed because play not only serves to give emotional satisfaction but has a cognitive and social function. Through play children assume certain roles and imitate events and personalities such as playing the role of a doctor or nurse. These imitations help to inculcate aesthetic values in children as they appreciate looking like the personalities whose role they assume and it is expected children may also wish to work hard and attain the position of those people. Vygotsky (1978) regards play as an embodiment of the child's egocentric language and "a particular form of speech at an early stage, one which leads directly to written language" (p.111). Apart from evincing itself in a situation in which the child appears as object regulated, self-regulated or other regulated, speech gets bound up in other literacy activities such as drawing and play which show us the importance of promoting language activities in which oral discourse forms the basis of the pupil's communication before he is able to express thoughts in written communication. Attention will now be directed to the implications of Vygotsky's framework of language learning to the teaching and learning of writing.

#### **2.2.4.2.2 Implications of Vygotsky's theories for composition writing**

So much has been written and debated on Vygotsky's theories on language learning that it would be impossible to try and link each aspect of the theories to the context of language learning. I will, therefore, address myself to the 'regulation' aspect of learning and then move on to consider the metalinguistic contexts of pre- school literacy activities. As stated in the previous section, the other-object regulation is reflected in the control teachers exert over language lessons. This is manifested in such language activities as structure and sentence drills and even in controlled composition writing whose main objective is to let the student manipulate certain selected structural items in slots. Although controlled writing may involve two paragraphs or more, the fact that the exercises are geared towards using certain specific structures may make the passage serve no meaningful communicative purpose. The pupils could be too preoccupied with language forms to pay any attention to the meaning of the text. The language used and dominated by the teacher in the classroom, is another manifestation of the teacher's authority and engagement with the object-regulation which tends to divorce learning from the child's experience as it is (Foley 1991:68) "the language presented to the learner, not as an activity for achieving self-regulation in the presence of others but as some object divorced from the natural developmental process that the individual has previously undergone in acquiring his first language".

Under object-other-regulation, the learner is unable to display his speech potential for discovering meaning. In teacher-controlled lessons, it is virtually impossible for the learner to ask for clarification of meaning or to request elaboration of a point if he feels threatened or is shy. Only under self-regulated learning, is s/he able to do so. Student-centred learning attained by the use of communicative teaching activities may thus be said to offer some hope of promoting self-regulated learning. This is likely to be fostered in classroom situations in which task-based learning, which takes account of the learner's needs and attempts to offer opportunities for acquisition of language skills (Long 1985), takes place. The dilemma arising from implementing task-based language activities, however, is that despite the efficacy of task-based learning attained by the use of such activities as information gap exercises, it may not be possible to promote such activities in a foreign language classroom in which the learners find it difficult to exchange information in the foreign language they are learning. It may, therefore, be necessary for such learners to be other-object regulated before they are self-regulated. Task-based language learning offers

the opportunity to look into the learners' needs but it may not be easy to do identify all the learners' needs. Individuals differ in ability and furthermore, the learners' needs have got to be weighed against those of the learner's community or society. The learner's needs have got to be weighed in terms of for example, the writing activities we think will motivate him and in terms of tailoring such writing as letter writing, telegram writing to what the society and schools regard as essential writing activities. Prabhu (1987:190-191) underscores this issue when he considers the promotion of the learner's needs alongside the role the learner is expected to play in society after school.

One view of education is that it provides young people with the knowledge and skill necessary for functioning in later years as useful members of the society... I am calling this an 'equipping' procedure in education - a procedure by which the learner gets equipped with the knowledge, skills or pattern of behaviour envisaged as educational ends. A different view of education is that it provides young people with opportunity and support in realizing their potential, in the form of understanding or ability. This view recognizes that the demands to be made in later years can be varied and unpredicted and that individuals will need to meet these demands in varied ways, such that there is a measure of fulfillment to themselves as individuals. Curricula content is therefore to be based not on a specification of future needs but on an understanding of learning processes and of the learners' current states. It may in practice, be useful to relate some part of what is taught to what is likely to be serviceable in later years but a major aim is to broaden such serviceability maximally by concentrating on the more fundamental abilities. I will refer to this as 'enabling' procedure in education.

It would seem that task-based learning activities are well predisposed towards "equipping" and "enabling" the learner, though the latter is difficult to ascertain because it depends on how competent the learner is, as well as the opportunity he is offered after school to exploit his potential. Generally speaking, the impetus provided by speech in communicative activities is as regards seeing writing as an interactive activity rather than a solitary activity involving a child wrestling alone with pen and paper. I will now direct my attention to the implication of the role of speech in pre-literacy activities such as drawing and play and how through these activities, speech influences writing. I will call these activities pre-literacy symbolism activities because Vygotsky (1978) regards them as constituting 'first order symbolism' as they represent the initial stages of writing.

Speech plays a crucial role during the first years of the child's acquisition of knowledge before the child puts an image on paper. While speech may be



internalized and assume the form of thought with which the child wrestles to find words to put in print, writing is an external medium through which we get to know what goes on in the child's mind. As Bruffee (1984:641) puts it: "If thought is internalized public and social talk, then writing of all kinds is internalized social talk made public and social again. If thought is internalized conversation then, writing is internalized conversation externalized". As I have pointed out elsewhere in this section drawing, playing and conversational talk have been studied and found to be viable preparations for reading and writing (Britton 1983; Clark 1984; Dyson 1983; Graves 1983; Daiute 1989; Blazer 1986). The implication of this for language teaching in general and writing in particular is that these pre-literacy symbolism activities, particularly play, can be used in simulation and role play activities prior to writing so as to provide the learner with ideas as well as linguistic input which he might make use of while writing.

The fact that some of the writing activities done in schools, particularly elementary schools, are an extension of or a reflection of the basic communication done at home by children under the guidance of their parents makes a study of how children learn at home important. Knowing how children learn at home can be useful in understanding the success and failures of children at school. Children are said to learn in almost the same way as adults and hence, a knowledge of strategies children use at home to learn, could probably help adult learners who may not have been lucky enough to receive formal education but are prepared to study for themselves at home. Adults may not emulate all the strategies used by children such as drawing, but it is assumed that adults can also learn to write from what they see around them and if they can also read, from their colleagues, just as children are able to read from their parents. I would now like to direct my attention to how homes could provide a viable resource for developing writing.

#### **2.2.4.3 Social interaction at home as a basis for literacy**

The preparation of children at home for school literacy whether consciously done or unconsciously done, has attracted a great deal of attention among educationalists and psychologists. Studies on aspects of learning at home have tended to look into the socio-economic background of children and to attribute this to children's success or failure at school. This has been particularly so with regard to middle class children and working class children's ability to read. For many years it has been pointed out that children from a working class background do not usually use a standard form of language similar to that of

middle class children and that their "restricted code" (Bernstein 1971) distinguished them from their middle class counterparts who have an "elaborated code" which approximates that of the school and who are thus able to follow instruction easily at school. The reason usually advanced is that middle class children are more likely to do better at school than working class children because the former are more likely to have access to written material (books, posters, newspapers) and are read to much more often than their working class counterparts. These views are now being challenged as unrealistic following a number of studies conducted to find out the different styles of learning the child is exposed to (Wells 1978; 1985; Snow 1983; Shickedanz 1982; Tizard and Hughes 1984). Wells (1978; 1985) and Snow (1983) for example, posit that the difference between middle class children, who are said to be read to more often than the working class children, does not lie in the deficiency of language on the part of working class children but on the fact that working class children have not been exposed to the language of the school which is said to be decontextualized (Snow 1983) and disembedded from the child's personal experiences. It is argued by the authors that all children come to school with a language and that the only difference is in the middle class children and working class children's ability to cope with the language of the school. Middle class children are said to be better predisposed to coping with school language not because of their exceptional intelligence arising from their socio-economic background but because of their advantage of being much more exposed to reading material that contains elements of school language than the working class children.

What these studies do, therefore, is not to demean the effort of parents reading to their children at home but to reinforce the fact that drawing, reading and writing at home are embedded in adult- child interaction which is vital before the child can encounter print at school. What is even more important is the fact that pre-literacy activities at home are embedded in the child's own experience and thus make it easy for the child to relate these activities to what he sees around him. The collaborative talk and non-verbal actions they get from their parents provides children with the support or "scaffolding" (Ninio and Bruner 1978; Applebee and Langer 1983; Langer 1984; Wood, Bruner and Ross 1976) necessary before the children are able to read and write on their own. It is regrettable that many developing countries are denied this literacy-rich environment, and so what I am trying to state here may sound idealistic and applicable in only a few homes in Tanzania . There the child's attaining the first stages of literacy are virtually the sole responsibility of the teacher.

However, since a literacy-rich environment does not necessarily entail the need for expensive gadgets such as audiotapes and television, providing support in reading at home is still possible using unsophisticated but readily available material such as pictures from local newspapers and even cartoons for writing on. Talking to children about matters they are likely to encounter at school is another way of preparing children for school literacy. Wells (1990) and Britton (1983) recount how children in their studies, through asking questions about pictures and the world they see around them, are able to explore things and wish to know more. It is not uncommon in fact, to find in Tanzania children who have learnt some elementary addition from their 'illiterate' parents in rural areas, who have taught them how to count by using figures each of which could symbolize an object around the house such as a maize cob. The child gets a notion of numbers and is thus able to relate this to the sums he does at school. Planting seeds after a specified number of footsteps is, unknowingly, also another symbolic form of teaching a child the concept of space and measurement. Similarly, the telling of stories around a log of fire at night, so very characteristic of many African rural homes, is an unrecognized form of literacy though the basic aim may be to make the child aware and appreciative of the socio-cultural norms of his tribe or community. The child indirectly learns about the construction of a story and may later employ this story schema to write a narrative composition, provided he is given more support by his teachers in acquiring the appropriate conventions for writing a narrative in a foreign language. Tizard and Hughes (1984) and Wells (1985) give good examples based on a Western society (England) in which the children are able to learn from their parents concepts and ideas which may later help them to read at school. Tizard and Hughes (1984:74-75) for example, give an example of a child (Pauline) who hears her mother reading out things she wants to buy from a supermarket.

- MOTHER: No, I haven't got enough to get my shopping. All of it  
 CHILD: Not all of it?  
 MOTHER: Irene's just taken five pounds. She'll bring some change back. It's not enough to get all that. Is it? (Points to the shopping list)  
 CHILD: No  
 MOTHER: See? So when Daddy gets paid I'll get some more money and then I'll go and get the rest.  
 CHILD: Yeah. That's nice, isn't it, Mum?  
 MOTHER: Mm... I got one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve (Counts items on list)

- CHILD: (Joins in counting) Nine, ten, eleven
- MOTHER: Fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen bits
- CHILD: mum, let's have a look! (Mother shows child the list) Do it again
- MOTHER: We gotta get rice, tea, braising steak, eggs, bacon, beefburgers, beans....Oh, Irene's gone to get them (Crosses off beans )..peas ham, corned beef
- CHILD: And what's that (Points to a word on the list)?
- MOTHER: That's lemon drink (Crosses off 'lemon drink') She's just gone down to get that one - see?

This example is an illustration of the fact that children are able to learn about written language through talking with their mothers. The child not only learns linguistic forms such as: "If she's got some more money"; "so when Daddy gets paid..."; but also learns about the concept of money. Oral discourse in this context, is serving to acculturate the child into the mainstream of everyday life of buying and selling, but it is also orienting him to written language which is meant to serve a useful purpose as it is related to the experiences of which the child is aware. Through observing and asking, the child is preparing ground for school literacy. Wells (1990:379)) defines being literate as "to have the disposition to engage appropriately with texts of different types in order to empower action , thinking, and feeling in the context of purposeful social activity". It is evident from Wells' definition that a social activity that is decontextualized and unlikely to promote the child's thinking within the context of his environment at home and at school, alienates the child from engaging in literacy. If children are able to encounter situations in which interactions with their mothers provide them with an opportunity to engage in some form of literacy, then some explanation has to be given as regards why children are not able to take advantage of the "scaffolding" provided at home to learn to read and write successfully at school. Is it merely because the language of the school is specialized language devoted to learning school subjects or is it because the child is not given the same language input as he gets from his mother at home? Contact between the child and his mother is minimized when the child gets older and thus secondary school pupils may not be said to benefit from language input from their mother as nursery school children do, though one would expect that they might take advantage of the input obtained before going to a nursery school and before coming to a secondary school. Teale (1984:118) ) stresses the nature of the dependency between the child and his mother, at least during the early stages of learning as a sine qua non to being literate when he states that

literacy is at first an interpsychological process structured and supported by the parent. With development, this parental scaffolding, self-destructs as the child takes over more of the interaction. Eventually reading and writing become intra-psychological processes, and the child is an independent reader and writer (p.118)

The social interaction internalized by the child is externalized as he reaches secondary school and is able to read independently. However, because the child is faced with a foreign language and has to read texts in the specialized language of school subjects, it is evident that his comprehension will be somewhat hindered and he might require support from both his English teachers and teachers of other subjects. If the interactional patterns at home, which were instrumental in his acquiring the literacy he comes to school with, are different from those of the home, the transition to school literacy will be quite difficult. Children rely on interactional patterns to become aware of and eventually realize linguistic forms. The way directives are formulated and questions are elicited will have affect the way the child internalizes those linguistic forms and uses them later on his own.

In their studies conducted among 32 children aged below five in Britain in the children's homes and schools, Wells (1978; 1985) and Tizard and Hughes (1984) found that the interactional patterns shown when mothers were interacting with their children were different from those shown when the children were interacting with their teachers. They found that parents modified their utterances so that they could be understood by children. The modification was aimed at making children not only understand their mothers' utterances but also participate in the conversation. The patterns of interaction observed by Wells were: comprehension checks, repetitions and expansions. Wells (1985) found that children initiated fewer exchanges, asked fewer questions and made fewer requests at school than they did at home. The children's' utterances at school were syntactically simple, they contained a narrower range of semantic content and were decontextualized as they tended to refer to situations that were outside that moment's context. Although Tizard and Hughes (1984) were not much interested in the linguistic forms arising from parent-child and nursery teacher-child interactions, they also found that nursery school children asked fewer questions at school than at home because the interactions were dominated by the teachers, leading Tizard and Hughes 1984) to conclude that the children's intellectual and language needs are much more likely to be satisfied at home than at school. Tizard and Hughes (1984) suggest five points which could be said to make the home a more congenial environment for

learning than school. One of these is the fact that home provides the child with an extensive range of activities most of which are related to the social world in which the child lives. Secondly, home is a context where the parent and the child share a common life. This means that home provides a context for negotiating meaning, though it may not necessarily mean a shared knowledge owing to a disparity between the mother's knowledge and the child's knowledge. The third factor is the small number of children at home who have to interact with the mother, contrary to the large number of pupils who have to interact with the teacher at school. Fourthly, learning at home is "embedded in contexts of great meaning to the child" p.251) such as the making of a shopping list referred to in this chapter and, finally, the intimate relationship between the mother and the child is another factor contributing to the ease of mother's interacting with the child. However, this does not mean that all mothers are able to exploit these five advantages to prepare their children for a transition to literacy. A mother may have only two children and yet fail to interact with them meaningfully because she is very busy or because she thinks that basic literacy is the sole responsibility of the teacher.

One of the limitations of the studies on the differences between home and school as centres of the child's literacy is that these studies have been conducted among native speakers of English who interacted with their mothers in the native language and went on to study the same language at school. The follow-up study of Well's Bristol study by Skehan (1988) looked into the English children's performance in French and not into the interactional patterns obtaining prior to and during the studying of French. It might be interesting to know whether or not the difference between interactional patterns used by parents at home and those used by teachers at school were still as great when children were learning a foreign language or whether because they were teaching a foreign language, teachers would modify their utterances in the same way as parents do. Skehan (1988) was, nevertheless, able to show a significant relationship between the children's use of language at home and their competence in reading and writing in French. He found that early vocabulary growth was associated with subsequent intelligence measured by IQ and that there was also a link between early vocabulary growth in the early years and the literacy based tests they administered. It is interesting also to note from this study that familiarity with cognitive verbs such as "know, think, mean, understand", was found to be directly linked to reading competence. Good readers were also found to have longer mean lengths of independent clauses thus suggesting that good readers could become potentially good writers.

Skehan's findings are similar to those of Torrance and Olson (1984) who found that good readers used cognitive verbs which were encoded in complex utterances. They also tended to use more subordinate constructions than poor readers. Torrance and Olson (1984) also found that good readers used more cognitive expressions and coordinate conjunctions and were prone to using ideational language rather than impersonal language. These results led them to conclude that the ideational aspect of language is related to the syntactical complexity of language and is closely related first to reading and subsequently to writing.

### **2.3 The impact of L1 acquisition on learning to write in a foreign language (FL)**

The implications of the studies of Wells (1978; 1985) and Tizard and Hughes (1984) and Skehan (1988) for composition writing are that oral language, even if it is in the learner's native language (L1), can form a basis for acquiring competence in writing in a foreign language (FL). Ideas can be discussed in one's L1 and the learner can strive for language resources in the FL in which to embody his ideas. Thinking out ideas in L1 may facilitate the dual task of cognitively searching for ideas and then putting down the ideas in the FL.

When writing in a FL, learners are said to experience a number of problems most of which appear to be connected with the new language system they are operating in. One of the main problems is alleged to be the learner's cultural patterns of thinking which, being different from that of the native speaker, make the FL writer's rhetorical organization different from that of the native speaker (Kaplan 1972). Others like Widdowson (1984:65) see the FL difficulty in composing as being due to "how to textualize discourse in a different language" often by trying to transfer the discourse of the mother tongue to FL discourse. It has thus generally been suggested that because writing is more difficult than speaking, as competence in writing depends on the learner's knowledge of the FL discourse, background knowledge (knowledge of the subject matter) and linguistic language, it is difficult for a FL learner to write in a second language (L2). Recent studies have begun to question Kaplan's assertions about culture-specific rhetorical organization and posit that FL learners may be as competent or incompetent as native speakers in their rhetorical organization (Mohan and Lo 1985). Mohan and Lo (1985) for example, quote a study conducted in India by Das who found that students produced samples of writing in which rhetorical strategies in L1 were as deficient as those in L2, thus suggesting that

interference is not important at the rhetorical level of the L2 compositions. They argue that competence in discourse organization is the crucial element in composition writing and that because discourse organization develops late in both L1 and L2, what is significant if the learner is to make any progress is training. This suggests that given the same training both the L1 writer and the L2 writer can write good compositions. Cumming (1989) supports this view with his findings which show that FL learners who had been exposed to and gained some ability in their earlier education (in their mother tongue ) were able to show writing expertise in the L2 (foreign language) though he warns that it may be premature to suggest that the FL expertise in writing in L2 necessarily means that the FL learner has mastered L2 proficiency.

In their study among Hong Kong Chinese students and American FL students, Mohan and Lo (1985) found that what was significant in the L1 ability to transfer to L2 writing skills was the nature of the task to which the learners are used. The authors found that American FL students who were used to pre-writing and post-writing discussions of their compositions and who paid less attention to grammar than their Chinese counterparts whose English instruction was predominantly grammar-oriented, showed no difference in their rhetorical organization from native English speaking Americans, thus suggesting that what was important was the type of instruction given to the FL learner rather than the cultural differences. Stalker and Stalker (1989) conducting their study among native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers of English (NNS) found that the NS and the NNS did not show any difference in how they began their first paragraph of their compositions. They all lacked a clear thesis statement in the first paragraph and made similar kinds of intra-sentential errors. Edelsky and Jilbert (1985) after conducting their study among monolingual (English speaking) and bilingual (Spanish speaking) children in the United States, found that Spanish children who talked first and then wrote on a subject they chose, used the experience of the reading they knew in Spanish to learn to write in English. The children used Spanish orthography in their spelling and punctuation but later as they grew up they no longer used the Spanish orthography. Edelsky and Jilbert's study together with that of Hudelson (1984) show that children can use the oral resources of L1 to write in L2. Edelsky and Jilbert were (1985) also able to observe that the bilingual children (Spanish speakers) tended to code-switch in the oral language (English) but they hardly code switched at all when they were writing in English. The study highlights the fact that introducing the child into another language system when he is still learning L1 (as is the case in Tanzania where pupils learn both Kiswahili and



English ) cannot retard the child's competence in either if he is at least well grounded in L1.

Other studies involving switching from L1 to L2 in composition writing have been mainly concerned with the strategies L1 learners use when composing in L2 in comparison with the strategies used by their native speaker counterparts (Jones and Tetroe 1987; Zamel 1983; Raimes 1985). Because of the prevailing process approach to writing in the United States, these studies have looked into the process of writing rather than the written products and do not therefore give us an insight into the learners' linguistic proficiency. However, they reveal that if the native speakers' and the FL speakers' writing strategies are the same then what needs emphasizing in composition lessons may simply be the language skill rather than how to go about writing the composition. Zamel, for example, found that the following composition behaviours were common to both native composers and ESL (English as a Second Language) composers: all composers rewrote as they wrote, revising chunks of discourse. They also spent a lot of time thinking of what to write and trying to figure out how to proceed. Zamel (1983: 173) observed this regarding all writing of what they thought:

While several transcribed some of these thoughts in the form of notes, lists or diagrams that mapped out the student's thought processes, others looked at their blank pages or into space until a beginning seemed to suggest itself.

All writers also read what they had written down to ascertain whether it matched what they had intended to put down. Raimes (1985) also found that some of the EFL writers were similar to unskilled L1 writers in their lack of planning. The L2 writers tended to show more commitment in writing and were not as concerned with errors as the L1 writers. FL writers find it difficult to compose because they have to contend with content, organization, vocabulary and structure which their native speaker (L1) counterparts also do, though without as much difficulty. These are areas which training could help to shape if FL writers are to attain L1 competence in writing. Raimes (1985: 250) underscores the point in summing up her study:

This study shows that students whose proficiency is judged as insufficient for academic course work generate language and ideas in much the same way as more proficient students. In other words, they use what they have and move on from that. With context, preparation, feedback and opportunities for revision, students at any level of proficiency can be engaged in discovery of meaning.

The place of decontextualized language in composition writing is important since children will enjoy writing about something they know. Writing about people or events within the child's community or the child's country should thus be encouraged. The writing of English language projects in Form Three and Four in Tanzanian secondary schools is a step in that direction. However, because these projects, which involve interviewing officials or visiting factories and writing reports about those visits, are part of continuous assessment for the examination, students do them to pass their examinations and their enthusiasm soon wears off when the project is over. If pupils' writing about what they are interested in is to have any meaning, it has to be made part of the writing programme. Cooperation between English teachers and teachers of other subjects is also very important if the pupils are to be familiar with the specialized language of the topics of the projects they write.

If learning to speak has been shown to be the interactional basis and is crucial in the child's acquisition of language naturally, then it makes sense to devise tasks at school, which give writing an interactional dimension as well. Since writing develops in the child years after he has learnt to speak, it is anticipated that tasks that promote oral interaction can be used as a prelude to writing.

#### **2.4 A Review of the behaviourist, nativist and social interactional views with relevance to this study.**

A review of the contributions made by Skinner, Chomsky, Piaget and Vygotsky in a section of one chapter may not do justice to their contribution. I will, however, confine my remarks to what I regard to be germane to writing.

Since oral language is the basis of behaviorism, nativism and social interaction, we need to look into how oral language comes to the fore during the child's early acquisition of a language system and gets harnessed and transformed into written language. It has been seen from these studies that the language production system on which the child relies, is dependent on a conversational partner who could be a parent or a peer. When the child goes to school, he will be deprived of this conversational support, but it is envisaged that he will still draw some support from it while writing since he has not yet got used to the language of the written discourse. The situation presents a dilemma to the child since on one hand he finds it easy to continue operating in a language system (conversational language) to which he is used, while on the other the school system dictates that he should use the written language. While the child may find it easy to draw on the support of the interactional language arising from

interacting with peers in narratives, he will find that it will not be of much use when expressing an opinion or argument. To what extent then does internalized speech (Piaget 1959) and the pupils' shift from support by elders and hence his being in a "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky 1978) help the child to write?

It was pointed out that the child has a schema (Piaget 1969) that seems structured to accommodate memory of the experiences the child has had. Thus, as advocated by Britton, Burgess, Martin, McLeod and Rosen (1975), the child will find it easy to write expressive compositions because of his experience with stories. Once told to explain something, the narrative schema may not be found to be relevant and he might be required to adjust this schema and orientate it to some new knowledge, just as a conversationalist used to listening to short conversations would do when confronted with a long turn. Bereiter and Scardamalia (1982) see children's problems in generating text as arising mainly from content rather than language. They argue that because children lack "*shared world knowledge*" they are unable to elaborate and be explicit enough to their readers. Bereiter and Scardamalia argue that once the shared world knowledge is made easy through "*procedural facilitation*" it is easy for children to write well. Bereiter and Scardamalia (1982) seem to be addressing themselves to native speakers. For a non-native speaker, the problems of writing seem to be related to both language and the children's lack of a shared world knowledge.

Bereiter and Scardamalia (1982) argue that once the child knows what to write about, the more abstract problems related to structure, semantics and style could be much more effectively handled. Procedural facilitation (i.e. "any reduction in the executive demands of a task that permits learners to make fuller use of the knowledge and skills they already have" , p.52) would thus help them to make use of the conceptual knowledge which they seem to have but which they fail to utilize as evidenced by children's inability to expand what they write and their inability to link propositions coherently. Teachers need therefore, to offer support or "*substantive facilitation*" before children can be left to write on their own. One form of support could be brainstorming to generate cue words which provide learners with concepts for what to write just as a pictorial composition could. By relating cue words or pictures to ideas and events the learner is aware of, he may be enabled to integrate them into his own experience. Providing prompts or phrases at the beginning of a paragraph or in the concluding paragraph could also help the child to do some memory

searching and relate the phrases or prompts to his present store of knowledge. Requiring pupils to complete stories in which they are supposed to reason or offer explanations for the occurrences of events, could help pupils to practice reasoning and have a sense of audience awareness as this example illustrates.

The following paragraph is the beginning of a story about what could have happened to you one day. Complete the story in two or more paragraphs saying what you think happened.

On Thursday morning I received a letter and learned that I had to appear for an interview. The interview was very important because I had finished Form Four nine months ago but had not yet been offered a job. Immediately after receiving the letter, I washed my face and put on my clothes. I did not take my breakfast because I had only a little time left. I stood at the bus stop and waited for the bus but when the first one came it was full. I later learned that the next bus would be coming after half an hour. It was then that I decided to take a taxi. The first taxi came and stopped but when I reached into my pocket I discovered that I had only twenty shillings left.

To be able to complete the above story would require that the child have world knowledge of the fact that an interview is held at the appointed time and that those who fail to turn up in time risk not only being excluded from the interview, but failing to get the job as well. The pupil may also need to know what one needs to do in a situation where he is short of money but has all the same to go. Does he go back home and get some more money? Does he borrow from a man he doesn't know at the bus stop? Or does he ring a friend who happens to have some means of transport to take him to the interview? Completing the story requires not only a *metamemorial search* (Bereiter and Scardamalia 1982) but also a metalanguage- words that could tell the reader more about the language the writer is using to explain the events.

Elementary writers faced with the task of completing a story could either write an additional paragraph probably regretting that they missed the bus and had to go back home or they could write only one sentence saying that they were unhappy to have missed the interview. Bereiter and Scardamalia (1982) state that the writer must move from knowledge telling to problem solving. He should not just write but use writing as a means of identifying problems and using language to solve those problems. In this way composition writing can be a

platform for thinking and reasoning in other academic subjects. The ability to relate content to one's memory or to draw conclusions from one's memory is difficult for the child and it is here that we find Piaget's advocacy of learning by stages of the child's growth to be somewhat relevant, though even at a young age, children could be exposed to some form of simple reasoning through language.

To what extent then oral language should be used for problem solving before the child embarks on writing as advocated by behaviourist is a contentious issue depending on what stage in the child's development the curriculum requires that he writes, and at what stage oral language may help in improving the child's learning. Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence with its emphasis on grammar, though helpful in making children construct sentences, may not be helpful towards the child's reasoning and drawing inferences. On the other hand, the socio-interactional approach advocated by Vygotsky (1978) provides the basis for integrating speech and writing, since student-student feedback can help students to pool ideas and integrate them with their existing frame of knowledge. The table below sketchily illustrates how Skinner's, Chomsky's, Piaget's and Vygotsky's views could feature in school writing.

Table 2.1. The learning theorists' approaches and their relationship to the nature of composition writing

Theorist	Approach/View	Pedagogical method	Nature/Type of writing
Skinner	Behaviourism/ Reinforcement	Audio-lingual	Rewriting of sentences  Controlled composition to be followed by guided composition
Chomsky	Mentalistic	Linguistic competence	Grammar exercises
Piaget	Nativist	Socio-cognitive	Picture composition  Composition based on stages on basis of age or class level (Controlled, guided and later, free compositions)
Vygotsky	Socio-interactional		Group work, Process writing.

As illustrated in the above table, each of these theories has a role to play in the nature of writing practised in schools. The type of writing envisaged by each of the theorists' views cannot be said to be mutually exclusive from the other. Skinner's view of starting with oral language and then moving to the writing of grammar before the actual writing of composition commences seems to be in consonance with Chomsky's view of the centrality of grammar in language learning and at the same time concurs with Piaget's notion of the development of stages. These could be related to composition writing by starting a composition with visual stimuli such as pictorial compositions which activate the child's conception of space, concepts and objects he sees around him before he is able to form abstract concepts in free writing on his own. Since learning to speak has been shown to have an interactional base, it makes sense to devise tasks at school which give writing an interactional dimension as well.

#### 2.4.1 Classroom tasks, interaction and writing

Probably the most seminal contribution to the discussion of the nature of general academic tasks has been that of Doyle (1979; 1983) who sees academic tasks as being essentially shaped by the cognitive involvement or operation which students bring to bear on the task. Doyle (1983) sees academic tasks as "defined by the answers students are required to produce and the routes that can be used to produce these answers" (p.161). In other

words, the products as well as the operation or strategies children employ to attain these products and the resources they have, constitute the bases for an academic task. He argues that in attaining a cognitive objective, a task will be accomplished and he sees the role of memory, the procedures for carrying out the task and knowledge required prior to doing the task as vital. Marx and Walsh (1988) take up Doyle's views and expand them further by focussing on four main issues: the conditions for the tasks under consideration, the classroom setting of the tasks and the way instruction is delivered and the cognitive plans which students make on the basis of the teacher's facilitating of the learning process. They argue for instance, that the classroom setting in which a task gets done will greatly influence the learners' cognitive involvement. While group work may be useful in solving reading comprehension questions for example, it may not be appropriate in solving a mathematics problem whose solution involves "lower levels of cognitive involvement" (p.210). The teacher's control of the task and the time allocated for the task may also affect the way the task is accomplished as well as the outcomes, and hence combine to influence strategies learners bring to the task. A teacher- controlled classroom task may seem necessary as in a reading lesson with primary school children but within the same class some writing may have to be left to the pupils alone.

The social configuration of the classroom thus features predominantly in determining how the learners might participate in the task. The way students respond and the language they use as well as the teacher's expectation and evaluation of those responses could reflect these social configurations by the way for example, learners from different social cultural backgrounds use the language and how the teacher reacts to the language used on the basis of 'appropriateness' or 'inappropriateness' of the language to school learning (Heath 1983; Collins and Michaels 1986; Michaels and Collins 1984; McCutchen 1989; Cazden 1986). Apart from the conditions of the task and the setting in which the task is set, the nature of instruction and the manner in which the task is administered could determine the cognitive resources learners bring to the task (Blumefeld, Mergendoller and Swarthout 1987). I will be devoting some attention to language learning tasks and the teaching materials, now commonly known as authentic materials, since these are designed primarily to promote language skills for meaningful communication and are thus germane to the theories regarding children's acquisition of language in natural contexts.

#### **2.4.1.1 Fluency and accuracy activities in language learning**

Traditional language teaching methodology seems to regard accuracy as a key to competence in a language. It is now acknowledged that acquiring language forms per se is not enough and that the language learner has to put the language to use so that he can engage in real life communication. Brumfit (1979; 1984) sees language activities in terms of the aspects of language they are intended to promote. Basically an activity may be geared towards promoting either the language form or structure being taught (accuracy) or the message or meaning (fluency) although it is quite possible that an activity may lead towards the child's acquisition of both. To use Rivers and Temperley's words (1978: 4) fluency activities are "skill using" activities since they enable the learners to put the grammar or vocabulary he has learnt to meaningful use and thus enable him to relate the rules of the language to his knowledge of the world (Canale and Swain 1980; Savignon 1972) whereas accuracy activities are "skill getting" activities. Brumfit (1979; 1984) sees fluency as essentially an ability to use the language much as the native speaker of the language would. This does not implicitly mean that one has to pronounce words with a native speaker's accent or use native speaker's idioms with explicit accuracy - though this would be a sign of his mastery of L2 - but it means that because a native speaker uses the language naturally and for communicative purposes, then only those activities that are geared towards promoting this naturalness can be said to be isomorphic with fluency learning. Free composition writing, for example, which to an extent precludes teacher control, may be seen to promote more fluency than a controlled composition as the latter tends towards the learner's manipulation of language forms. The learner's freedom to express himself and take 'risks', to make errors as a natural part of learning just as is the case in mother-child interaction, are among the characteristics of the promotion of fluency (Corder 1967; Hendrikson 1980; Bruton and Samuda 1980). Pair work and group work activities thus stand a better chance than teacher-controlled lessons in ridding the learner of the stigma that is usually associated with the making of mistakes in a language classroom. However organizing pair work or group work may not be adequate by itself unless this is accompanied by materials that give scope for the learners to talk and enable learners who might experience the stigma to express themselves freely. The use of teaching materials that encourage learners to interact will minimize the teacher's intervention and the frequent error correction that could have a negative effect on the learner. Some brief attention will now be focused on the use of teaching material that is likely to promote interaction and which in view of its promoting



natural use of language in communicative situations, has been called "authentic" (Breen 1985a; 1987; Breen and Candlin 1980).

#### **2.4.1.2 Authentic materials and the writing of compositions**

Prescribed textbooks still constitute the basis on which syllabus designers and teachers are able to ascertain the content to be covered in a course. While it may not be easy to do away with a text it may not be difficult either to supplement textbooks with materials that give the learners an opportunity to manipulate text for meaningful purposes. However, a notion of what authentic materials may be is warranted before suggesting what authentic material could be used in a particular context. Authentic material is regarded as having a genuine communicative purpose and can thus be said to be a replica of the environment the child encounters in his day to day life; hopefully a literacy environment that is replete with pictures, posters, music and other media that try to capture the real life and cultural aspect of the community. Breen (1985: 61) sees the following as relevant to the promotion of authentic learning and hence regards texts which embody these characteristics as having authenticity: input data for the learner, potential for the learner's own interpretation of the text, conduciveness to learning and the actual situation of the classroom. Enright (1991: 217), quoting Cohen (1986), offers the following as characteristics of tasks that would support productive peer interaction and group work:

- Has more than one answer or more than one way to solve a problem
- Is intrinsically interesting and rewarding
- Allows different students to make different contributions
- Uses multi media
- Involves sight, sound and touch
- Requires a variety of skills and behaviors
- Also requires reading and writing
- Is challenging

The characteristics of a task which *does not* support group work are:

- Has a single right answer
- Can be done more quickly and efficiently by one person than by a group
- Is too level
- Involves simple memorization or routine learning

Authentic materials are thus envisaged to be supportive of the language acquisition theories which regard the child's grappling with the "here -now" of situations (Tizard and Hughes 1984; Snow 1983) as central to the child's ease of mastering the language. During its infancy, the child gets comprehensible

and adequate input from its mother through simple questions and repetitions of words and sentences. By using its mother's language resources, the child is able to learn more complex language with which he will need to solve more complex problems. Like the natural language acquired by the child, authentic language serves some special purpose as it approximates the language the child is familiar with in his environment. It is in view of this that authentic tasks have to take into account the culture of the community or the culture of the learner's country, something which is easy to accommodate in a country where pupils have more or less the same cultural norms, but which may not be easy to attain in places where there are many ethnic groups learning a dominant language of a 'dominant' culture.

Apart from providing the learner with linguistic knowledge, authentic materials therefore, provide the learners with knowledge of the discourse of the genre they are writing in as well as knowledge of the world, all of which constitute the learner's communicative competence (Canale and Swain 1980; Savignon 1972). However, the use of an authentic text may not necessarily ensure that the learners acquire meaningful knowledge as there could be a mismatch between the use of the authentic text and the pedagogical instruction which the teacher wishes to impart. While a text might be authentic, the teacher could treat the text like any other and ignore any meaning that the learners might relate to their own experience (Widdowson 1984). I also envisage a problem in treating any material that comes into the classroom seriously for a learning purpose rather than for any other since any teaching material brought into the classroom tends to be regarded first for its instructional purpose and only later for the creativity or fun with which it may be associated. There is therefore, bound to be a mismatch between what the teacher regards as an authentic activity that is bound to create meaningful learning and the pupils' desire to learn which could prevail over the natural learning objective we want our authentic material to bring about. An understanding of this mismatch could be useful to the language teacher.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has attempted to look into aspects of the acquisition of writing. It began by offering a functional approach to writing based on the general functions of language particularly those propounded by Halliday (1975). These general language functions were then related to the role writing has played in cognitive and social development since the earliest civilizations. School writing

was then seen within the context of the Hallidaian conceptual/ideational and communicative/interpersonal functions of language. Since written language is preceded by oral language, attention was devoted to the different views or concepts which have affected the way oral language and written language are given attention in school curricula. Oral language was then examined within the framework of Skinner's (1957) behaviourist approach to learning. Chomsky's 'nativist' approach to learning with particular focus on his view of language as rule governed behaviour and his views on linguistic competence were then looked at and compared with the views of Dell Hymes (1972) on linguistic competence and linguistic performance and his critique of Chomsky's views. The socio-cognitive approach to language learning was discussed on the basis of Piaget's views on learning, particularly Piaget's views on the child's developmental stages, his concept of the schema, and his views on the egocentric aspect of the child's speech. Drawing on language acquisition studies particularly those that have tried to show how parents are able to provide scaffolding to their children, and also drawing on the socio-cognitive and socio-interactional views advanced by Piaget and Vygotsky respectively, an attempt was made to try to show how children are able to exploit the power of oral language in learning to write. Against this backdrop has been the equally significant fact that since learners come to school with oral language that has benefitted from social input, they must be prepared to face the written language of the school which, being deprived of the social input, is much more abstract and more difficult than the oral language. To move from oral language which was principally geared to meeting the child's interactional needs at home to the written language of the school intended for problem solving, is difficult particularly for non-native speakers who find both the target language's spoken and written modes difficult to learn. To learn both the spoken and the written language requires a lot of input from the teacher as well as a lot of practice on the part of the learners. An attempt has also been made in this chapter to ascertain how the language input of L1 speakers, can be utilized to learn writing in L2 and finally, I related this to language learning tasks in an attempt to see how tasks can promote the natural interactions which are central to language acquisition.

An understanding of oral language acquisition is important for the study of writing because learners usually project their oral language into the written language. Hence, unless one understands the functions which oral language serves and its relationship to written language, it is difficult to understand why children's language deviates from written language and looks like speech

written down, and it is also difficult to know how to help them not to make the mistakes they do make in their compositions. An understanding of the views of language acquisition theorists, particularly how they relate to speech and writing is thus called for to reinforce our understanding of what learners do.

The views of the behaviourist, nativists and social interactionists all indicate the importance of oral language for the development of written language. So one may ask to what extent is the child able to utilize the oral language that appears crucial for the development of his writing, and how is the classroom disposed to help him to do this? To answer these questions requires looking into the similarities and differences between the oral language and the written language and how an understanding of the differences between the two modes is likely to help the learner to draw on his experiences of the oral language and adapt it to suit the lexical and syntactic requirements of the written language which will determine his success or failure at school. It is towards these issues that attention will be directed in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **SPOKEN AND WRITTEN DISCOURSE**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The relationship between speaking and writing has for years considerably attracted the attention of psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, educationalists and teachers. Psychologists have on their part been interested in finding out how oral language leads to children's acquisition of writing skills and how the acquisition of the latter is linked to cognitive development (Scribner and Cole 1988; Greenfield 1972) while anthropologists have been focusing on the link between writing and the development of societies and civilizations (Goody and Watt 1972; Olson 1977; Scribner and Cole 1988). The comparatively advantageous position which writing seems to enjoy over speaking because of its being used widely for academic, technical and commercial purposes, has led sociologists to regard writing as an "elaborated" code mastered by the middle class while the working class are, due to their 'non-standard' largely informal language, said to have a "restricted" code which is predominantly in the spoken mode (Bernstein 1971). Linguists have on the other hand, been interested in the linguistic features of speaking and writing so as to assess the complexity of either the spoken mode or written mode (O'Donnell 1974; Akinaso 1982; Halliday 1985; Perera 1986; Hammond 1990) whereas teachers have been directing their attention to the differences between the spoken and the written mode largely because of the fact that success or failure at school has usually been attributed to failing or managing to write.

An understanding of the similarities and differences between spoken language and written language could, therefore, help to cast some light on why children fail to make use of the oral language they bring from home to write at school, and place teachers in a good position to help children acquire the conventions of writing while at the same time using oral language as an aid to learning.

### **3.2 The transition from speech to writing: implications for composition writing**

An attempt to consider the ramifications which the differences between speaking and writing have on composition writing, has to consider first, the social and cognitive constraints which written discourse is likely to entail for the child as he moves from the spoken mode to the written mode.

I pointed out in Chapter Two that the studies of Goody and Watt (1972); Greenfield (1972); and Scribner and Cole (1988) attempt to show the importance which literacy has on cognitive development and that this situation is brought about by the person's engagement in practical activities. In the Vai culture, for instance, as documented by Scribner and Cole, engaging in practical activities and hence engaging in day to day representation of experience, is what makes the Vai people solve problems through using their script. However, the limitation of this kind of literacy is that since it is tailored to the Vai's social and economic activities, it does not seem well predisposed towards helping them to solve other problems outside their environment. In other words, we are not sure whether knowledge arising from the Vai script would be germane to solving more sophisticated problems that are decontextualized from the Vai's experience.

The Vai example can be used to explain the transition that the child makes as he moves from oral discourse to written discourse. Since the child's environment is replete with the here-and -now experience that arises from the practical activities that he does while interacting with his mother (Tizzard and Hughes 1984; Snow 1983), we can assume that engaging in decontextualized written language will impose not only linguistic constraints but also cognitive constraints. The constraints do not only arise from the lack of social input hitherto obtained from dialogue with peers, but also from the fact that the child is now engaged in a new form of thinking that has to be brought into exist by way of a new discourse system and a new linguistic system within the school context which is also new to the child.

The secondary school context which suddenly makes the learner engage much more in transactional rather than expressive writing, thus places a great demand on the child who is now required to use the written language to organize information logically by drawing on both the new knowledge acquired at school and the old knowledge arising from his day to day experiences. Language now becomes a channel not only for expressing the child's needs

but also for thinking. Wells (1981:254) underscoring the cognitive and linguistic constraints which a young writer faces as he moves from oral discourse to written discourse sees the following distinct processes as handicaps

(a) assembling the relevant meanings and organizing them in a structure appropriate to the particular narrative, argument, description etc. which is the purpose of the writing; (b) shaping the material so that it is oriented to the expectations and information which it can be assumed the interested reader will bring to the text; (c) encoding it in words and syntactic structures which coherently, explicitly and elegantly express the intended message.

Scinto (1986:101) puts it in more or less the same way when he states that

in the written norm the psychological locus of control is situated within the producer; in oral discourse there is a shared interpsychological control of topic between participants. As a consequence, the production of written text demands more elaborate strategies of pre-planning. Written language demands the conscious organization of ensembles or propositions to achieve its end. The need to manipulate linguistic means in such a conscious and deliberate fashion, entails a level of linguistic self-reflection not called forth in oral discourse.

Whereas in oral discourse, signalling new information could be attained by some prosodic feature and a topic shift might be arrived at by using a framing device such as the word "Right" or "OK", it is not possible to do this in written discourse and the writer has to use syntactical and lexical features to get his message across. It is this engagement with syntactical and lexical features of the monologic discourse (writing), that makes the transition to writing difficult. Making use of the monologic discourse to encode meaning clearly is a more arduous task than speaking, and hence being initiated into the new symbolic system, with its own structures, semantics and pragmatics, means that writing, unlike speech is a skill that has to be taught.

To become familiar with the written discourse system at school, the child is expected to be taught the four major aspects of written language (Soter 1987): the graphics (spelling, punctuation and the mastery of handwriting); the linguistic features (syntax, morphology and vocabulary); the semantic and textual (cohesion devices for connecting ideas) and the rhetorical conventions (how to use language effectively). For an EFL/ESL learner of English, this means learning first the phonics of the target language which, for Swahili speakers, is very different from that of the mother tongue, and then learning the written conventions of the target language. The shift from the oral to the written discourse of the target language is thus more difficult for EFL/ESL learners and

reinforces the fact that it is a mistake to assume that once an EFL/ESL learner has mastered the rudiments of the language-particularly grammar-he can automatically write a good composition.

### 3.2.1 Composition writing constraints

Bereiter and Scardamalia (1985) regard two main problems as impinging on the children's ability to compose. The first one concerns the children's inability to plan and keep in mind the points on which they have to write; what Bereiter and Scardamalia (1985) call *information processing load*, and the second relates to their limited discourse schemata which are said to hinder children from structuring their compositions to fit in with the relevant discourse conventions. These problems arise because the transition from oral to written discourse involves the "upgrading of a discourse production system adapted at all levels to the condition of a dialogue so that it can function autonomously in a goal-oriented manner" (Bereiter and Scardamalia 1985:96). For it to be able to do so requires that the learner knows what he is going to write. While in a dialogue the learner is likely to get prompts or even non-linguistic signals from a conversational partner, in writing he is left to his own devices to think out what to write and to maintain *sustained production* of the discourse.

Knowledge of what to write can be derived either from one's personal experience or from cue words provided by the teacher during brainstorming or from a list of words on the blackboard. *Memory search* or an attempt to link new information obtained through listening to the teacher, taking down notes or reading and the old information obtained through personal experience, is another hurdle to children when writing and gets affected by the child's lack of adequate linguistic resources as well as time constraints. Most EFL/ESL learners may remember points to write down but have to spend a lot of time thinking about the target language structures to use to express their points or resort to consulting their dictionaries and crossing out words and sentences they think need replacing. The fact that compositions are written within a scheduled time means that pupils will not be able to plan their compositions properly and will end up producing what Bereiter and Scardamalia (1985) call *knowledge telling* composition-compositions in which there is little planning and little logical connection of ideas-rather than *problem solving* compositions.

Apart from the problem of memory search, novice writers are faced with a problem of *discourse structuring* or the way the writer is able to strategically organize his composition. The way he is able to set goals or plan for his



composition and *revise* or *edit* his work, will depend on both memory search and discourse structuring. There is no demarcation line between one process and another and the writer will move from one stage to another and possibly go back again to the first stage depending on his ability to generate information. Which aspect of these stages the teacher thinks will be his responsibility and which ones should be left to the learners, will depend on the learner's "world knowledge", his linguistic knowledge and also the complexity of the task.

### 3.2.2 Writing 'strategies' and writing constraints

The literature on current research on writing suggests many stages or activities writers can engage in during the prewriting or writing phases in order to overcome the constraints the writer is likely to face. Put simply, the stages would be presented thus:

#### Prewriting activities

Brainstorming

Note-making/List making

Planning

#### Writing activities

Drafting

Revising

Writing

Post-drafting/Editing

The activities are presented in a complex set in which a writer recursively moves back and forth from one stage to another until he is able to finish his composition. I have, however, two reservations about this set of activities. Firstly, there is a danger that adhering to this plan would be somewhat similar to adhering to the traditional approach which hinged on the writer's adherence to certain rules of writing such as observing the Introduction, the Body and Conclusion of a composition and some linguistic patterns with which the first paragraph would begin. Secondly, it is not clear whether this pattern is supposed to be a plan for the teacher before he teaches compositions or whether it is a guide to students when writing. However, the fact that the plan is based on oral discourse as a basis for writing, manifests the importance of using discussion as a bridge between the learner's oral or dialogic discourse and monologic written discourse. Drawing on oral language to help the child explore points to write about while still adhering to the written convention could be ideal, as Bereiter and Scardamalia (1985: 102) put it. This might

make it possible for children to express themselves through written discourse while relying on discourse production that has been only minimally modified from its original conversational purpose

In order that oral language can be used as a bridge between the abstract language of the school and the child's first hand experience of practical activities (Wells 1981), there is a need to make learners engage in independent and critically enquiring activities. Learners can do this effectively if they are able to differentiate between the oral language they use in their day-to-day activities and the decontextualized language they are made to use to encode the representation of their experiences in writing.

### **3.3 Speaking and writing: an overview**

The way the relationship between speaking and writing is viewed has very much affected the way we teach English. It is evident that in places where EFL learners are unable to write because of their lack of linguistic proficiency, attention has usually been focused on developing their speaking ability. However, in other places where English is the native language as well as in those places where English may not be the native language but where emphasis is laid on the parallel development of both skills, written discourse is given prominence alongside speaking. The two different approaches however, do seem to indicate that there is some mixed feeling about the relationship between the two modes. Hence, while some see writing as a skill which should be developed only after other skills have been mastered, others see both skills as interdependent. The functions and purposes of language which I attempted to highlight in the previous chapter can be said to be instrumental in revealing the differences between speaking and writing. The fact that speaking is mainly geared to serving interpersonal functions such as expressing one's needs and feelings and the fact that writing serves mainly ideational/conceptual functions, can be held to account for the differences between speaking and writing. The differences between the two modes affect the way we convey meaning either through speaking or writing and the way we use lexical and syntactical features to have that meaning conveyed. I will come back soon to this point after mentioning the few similarities that exist between speaking and writing.

There is a tendency to regard speaking and writing as completely different modes probably because the latter is a representation of sounds into orthographic forms while the former involves merely producing sounds. While I agree with Stubbs (1980) that "writing is not simply a way of recording speech but has its own distinctive forms and functions" (p. 23), I would state that the differences between the two modes lie not so much in their being physically different processes as in their forms and registers. Both speaking and writing tend to use the same vocabulary and grammar of the language to express an

idea because both modes draw on the same system of the language. The use of contracted forms of words in spoken discourse for instance, may not signal any difference between speaking and writing but could simply be a result of the speaker or both interlocutors being in a hurry and thus producing short utterances which they expect to convey the same meaning. In written discourse, contracted forms can be common in informal written texts, such as personal letters or in novels where the author is quoting what his character might have said. The writer, being denied the physical context with his interlocutor, has no alternative but to ensure that he writes words in full though he could use contracted forms in quoting the words spoken by his characters or to achieve a particular effect in a sentence. Both spoken language and written language show similar stylistic variations (Stubbs 1986, Biber 1986). Both spoken language and written language can be formal or informal although the former rather than the latter, has more chance of appearing informal. Language can thus range from the informal aspect of casual talk to a lecture or prepared political speech which can be as formal as written language. The lecture or political speech could also be replete with repetitions for the sake of showing emphasis, just as an informal chat or the writing of beginners might be or even the writing of advanced writers who aim at showing semantic continuity or simply wish to create some effect in their message.

One of the advantages spoken discourse has over written discourse is that the interlocutors may not only rely on the words they use. If communication breaks down because one of the interlocutors cannot be heard properly or is using a difficult word, the interlocutors can still sustain the discourse because they are able to use such paralinguistic features as gestures and facial expressions and such prosodic features as sound pitch, rhythm and intonation to keep their conversation going. The writer is denied these ancillary means of communication and his meaning therefore resides in the text. In order that this meaning can be understood by his readers, the writer not only needs to put it in comprehensible English but he has also got to have background knowledge of the subject matter and ensure that his potential reading clientele is at least aware of it. He also needs to have linguistic knowledge as well as knowledge of the discourse of the genre of his writing. When the writer, without introducing us to the subject begins his writing thus:

One afternoon last fall I found myself unable to leave my car when I arrived at the grocery store. On "All Things Considered" there was an excerpt from a series called "Breakdown and Back", the story of a

mental breakdown as experienced by one woman, Annie (Green 1989: 104)

we may take it for granted that his readers know or can infer that "All Things Considered" is a radio programme and that the readers listened to it or read about it, and also the fact that they are themselves likely to have radios. If the writer had been talking with someone who did not know what he was talking about, we would have expected the person to ask the writer: "What is 'All Things Considered'?" or "What are you talking about?". The writer has, nevertheless got to be explicit lest he evinces "communicative dysfunction" (Widdowson 1984:50) due to his overestimating his readers' knowledge. The non-reciprocal nature of writing which entails the writer adjusting his knowledge to that of his readers and at the same time striving to present information in appropriate language and appropriate discourse, is what makes writing difficult. Widdowson (1984: 49) sees this problem as transcending any difficulty that could arise because pupils are not able to distinguish between the spoken mode and the written when he states that the main difficulty in writing arises from

the *manner* in which communication is carried out from a reciprocal exchange in which meanings can be openly negotiated to a form of interaction which is non-reciprocal and which requires therefore that negotiation be carried out covertly through the process of internal enactment.

The non-reciprocal nature of writing thus entails that the writer has to resort to devices which, though different in form from those used by the speaker, (such as pauses, repetitions, false starts and fillers), will convey the message as effectively as in speaking. I will now dwell on the non-reciprocal nature of writing with a view to attempting to show how it affects speaking and writing. I will first devote some attention to describing the reciprocal nature of speaking and later contrast it with the non-reciprocal nature of writing.

### **3.3.1 The non-reciprocal nature of writing**

The nature of communication in informal situations and in the classroom is such that there are rules governing who should talk to whom and how (if there are more than two interlocutors). It is apparent that the one who gets the floor first could be the one to start talking, though he may be reluctant to do so or even not get replied to even if he talks. In order to sustain a conversation, interlocutors have thus got to observe the manner in which they allocate each other turns. Turns in conversation are not structured in isolation but are formed in relation to each other in sequences which Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson

(1974) have called *adjacency pairs*. The following exchange between A and B shows how the four turns are allocated.

A. Are you very busy this afternoon?

B. No

C. Will you please accompany me to the Post Office

D. Yes

It is evident that in this short exchange, the first turn is an indirect request to B to accompany him to the Post Office. The second turn is an answer to the question in the first turn but it is also an acceptance of doing what A is likely to request and culminates in an acceptance of the request (invitation) in the fourth turn. The two interlocutors are not only able to monitor the flow of their conversation but they seem to understand each other.

A writer does not have an interlocutor immediately present and he can only initiate an idea as a speaker would in a turn, in a sentence. He could make his sentence a question by adding a question mark or he might use a full stop if he is not asking a question. Meanwhile, if his intention is to show emphasis he could underline a word (or italicize it if he is typing) or write it in capital letters or even use an exclamation mark. He could equally resort to grammar and use inverted subject-verb forms and write: In no way am I going to do it rather than the usual Subject -Verb order : I am not in any way going to do it. He might <sup>as</sup> well insert a new word instead of the one he thinks is wrong and which he has crossed out, in the same way a speaker might either correct himself when he is speaking or be corrected by another interlocutor. The writer may even cross out altogether words or phrases which he thinks are wrong in the same way a speaker would paraphrase his sentence when speaking or even abandon a word altogether if he is not sure of it (Faersch and Kasper 1983) and thinks that his using the word or phrase might lead to his being stigmatized. To be able to make such corrections requires more than a knowledge of grammar, punctuation and vocabulary. It also requires the learner to have knowledge of the discourse he is engaging in (whether it is a scientific genre or commercial genre) if he is to be equipped with the appropriate forms with which to express his ideas as well as a knowledge of the subject matter. The context-reduced nature of writing thus imposes a linguistic, discourse and background-knowledge burden on the writer. The writer can, however, be said to have the advantage of being able to go over what he has written down unlike the speaker who may have to rely only

on his intuition or that of his interlocutor to correct his speech. It is this permanency of writing, as contrasted with the transient nature of speaking, which can be attributed to the 'supremacy' which writing seems to be accorded in comparison with speaking in so far as the maintaining of records, preservation of knowledge or storage of literature are concerned. This has its implications for the language features of speaking and writing. Informal conversation for example, makes use of short, sometimes incomplete sentences, because the speaker knows that he does not have enough time to complete his utterances and is aware that his interlocutor understands him. On the other hand, the time the writer has allows him to pack information in complex lexical and syntactical chunks as I will be attempting to show later in this chapter. The planned aspect of writing is, apparently, what seems to accord writing the "elaborateness" suggested by Bernstein (1971). Akinnaso (1982) sees the permanency of writing as making writing the mode that "affords the linear representation of thought in visuo-spatial form; its permanency and surveyability facilitate thinking and reorganization of expression" (p.114). A writer is thus usually slower than a speaker in encoding his thoughts. The slowness of the writer, however, allows him to reorganize his thoughts into appropriate discourse and appropriate linguistic forms. However, I would argue that this is not always the case because there are EFL learners who may spend a lot of time thinking about what to write and yet fail to put down anything on paper due to cognitive or linguistic constraints or both.

### **3.3.2 The "planned" aspect of written discourse**

A number of studies have tried to look into the impact which the "planned discourse" aspect of writing has on both the quantity and the quality of writing (Scardamalia, Bereiter and Goelman 1982; Gould 1980; Blass and Siegman 1975; Graham 1990). These studies seem to be based on the notion that because writing is less time constrained than speech and because writing is devoid of the interruptions which speech faces, there is a likelihood that writing is less problematic than speaking. The studies also advance the notion that being constrained by the mechanics of writing such as grammar, spelling and punctuation, is likely to interfere with planning and the organization of ideas while writing, and will affect the quantity and quality of what one writes. The findings of these studies generally indicate that the oral compositions produced by narrating on a tape recorder were longer than those written on the same subject. An interesting finding however, is that of Graham (1990) who found that orally dictated compositions were not only longer but were also of higher quality

than written ones. His results contradict those of Scardamalia, Bereiter and Goelman (1982); Hidi and Hildyard (1983;1985); Hildyard and Hidi (1982) who found that despite the length of the oral compositions, the written compositions were superior in quality measured by cohesion, semantic features such as the organization of ideas and the number and types of words used. An interesting thing I find in these studies concerns interruptions in the organization of ideas being caused by the writer engaging in grammar, spelling or punctuation. I would tend not to regard this observation as universally applicable since it often happens that EFL learners do not go back to engage in these mechanics since they are not conscious of the errors they make and furthermore, they would tend to write so slowly as they search for words and correct linguistic forms that only a few would have time to go over what they have written down.

The fact that writing involves some planning has been given extensive attention by Ochs (1979). Ochs (1979) regards writing as "planned discourse" and speech as "unplanned discourse". According to Ochs a planned discourse is one for which there is prior organization of thought and ideas before it is produced while unplanned discourse is produced without forethought and organization. Ochs (1979:62-72) gives four characteristics which distinguish planned discourse from unplanned:

1. In relatively unplanned discourse more than in planned discourse, speakers rely on the immediate context to express propositions.
2. In relatively unplanned discourse, more than in planned discourse, speakers rely on morphosyntactic structures acquired in the early stages of language development. Relatively planned discourse makes greater use of morphosyntactic structures that are relatively late to emerge in language.
3. In relatively unplanned discourse more than in relatively planned discourse, speakers tend to repeat and place lexical items in the expression of a proposition
4. In relatively unplanned discourse, the forms and content of sequentially arranged social acts tend to be more similar than in relatively planned discourse.

It appears that because of the planned nature of writing, it allows some drafting, editing and rewriting to be done by the writer. If, as Ochs (1979) claims, the morphosyntactic structures of planned discourse - and hence writing - come late in the child's development, then what this implies is that teachers can no longer regard composition writing as emerging from the learner's natural talents and hence unteachable. Another factor regards how the teacher can help the

learner to write without paying undue attention to the 'mechanics' of writing such as spelling, grammar and punctuation which are said to impinge on the learner's ability to communicate (Scardamalia, Bereiter and Goelman 1982) and yet enable them to write a good quality composition. This may not seem easy in a situation where stress is placed on language usage (essentially grammar) and where the syllabus and examinations dictate the pace at which learning tasks should be carried out. Ochs (1979: 58) states that writing is not only planned but "plannable" as well because

in writing the communicator has more time to think out what he is going to say and how it will be said. Additionally, the writer can rewrite and reorganize the discourse a number of times before it is eventually communicated.

To think out what to write and how to write it requires not only knowing what to write but also knowing the language in which to write it. "Plannable" language would thus tend to rely much more than speech on the knowledge the writer gets at school regarding the conventions of writing as well as knowledge of different registers. It would also seem that the writer may need to draw on the language gained from reading the literature of different subjects. It is in view of this that I would posit that even some forms of speech are plannable because in delivering a public/political speech to a specialized audience (e.g a scientific conference), the speaker would tend to spend some time thinking about the appropriate phrases to use and will often use the specialized vocabulary of the field of the audience if the audience is to understand him. He may also need to rewrite his speech or cross out a sentence before delivering it orally if he thinks that it is inappropriate.

Because of the planned nature of writing, Lautamati (1990) posits that writing is concerned with propositional coherence whereas spoken language tends to exhibit interactional coherence. In the latter the participants tend to share an immediate pragmatic context and they might well know each other. Where propositional coherence prevails, one would expect to find language features that refer to people or objects outside the interlocutors' context, such as the use of the third person pronoun (he, she, it) as against the first and second person (I, you) and the use of cohesive items that link one idea to another. However, I would regard planned discourse and unplanned discourse as on the same cline rather than completely detached or independent since a text may have both propositional coherence and interactional coherence depending on the purpose of the text or if the writer is intent on achieving a certain effect and



thinks that he can do so by interacting with readers through his characters engaging in dialogue or by quoting what someone said so as to bring the characters to life or to make past action look live by using the present tense instead of the past tense as in radio or television news reports. Whether a text we are talking of is unplanned (spoken) or planned (written), will affect the way we use language to encode it and, inversely, the language could affect the discourse of the text. It is on this basis that I would now like to turn my attention to the linguistic features of spoken and written discourse. However, before that, I would like to relate the production aspect of writing and, particularly the context-dependent aspect of speaking and the context-independent aspect of writing to composition writing.

### **3.3.2.1 The "planned" nature of written discourse and composition writing**

The implications of the differences between oral language and written language for a child who is making a transition from acquiring language at home where oral language predominates to learning school language which is predominantly written whether he is reading or writing, can be overwhelming and affect the child's language development. We have seen that writing takes place without the physical context that prevails when two interlocutors are interacting and that the writer's "covert interaction" (Widdowson 1983; 1984) provides the writer with an opportunity to plan his discourse and organize his thoughts. If this is the case, why then do children fail to write and what are the implications of this for composition writing? It is apparent that in many EFL situations, it has often been assumed that once the learner has acquired oral skills, writing skills are likely to develop naturally, a misconception which could explain why composition writing is not given as much attention as grammar or reading comprehension in secondary schools.

One of the ways of making the child understand the difference between oral language and written language would be to expose him to writing tasks which demand the use of both talking and writing. Completing dialogues for instance, or completing telephone conversations by filling in the blank spaces in a passage about what someone at the other end may have said, serves to make the child aware of how language is used when people are interacting. Since language used in this type of writing would fall in between informal spoken language and formal written language, the child will learn how to use language for the two modes. Of greater importance, however, might be the transforming of such an exercise into the writing of a business letter or a report for which the

child requires the use of more formal language. Reading especially among elementary learners, involves decoding the written language and speaking as the child reads out loud and probably says a little about what he has read. It is anticipated that reading could also provide a basis for writing down what pupils say and then reading it out again or talking about it. Pupils could also, alternatively, be exposed to the different forms of oral language. Engaging in debates on a topic such as "Has Science benefited mankind?" would require more formal language than an informal chat. Children could participate in debates and then write down what has been discussed. In this way children are able to see the link between the oral language and the written language and find out that although the two modes may be interdependent, they may not be constructed in exactly the same way. I would now like to direct some attention to the semantic and syntactical features of the spoken mode and the written mode so as to ascertain whether or not the differences between the semantic and the syntactic forms of the two modes has any bearing on the quality of written compositions.

### **3.3.3 The semantic and syntactic features of oral and written discourse**

The lack of an immediate context for a writer and the fact that he has to explicitly express his views to his readers, has some ramification for the language the writer uses. The fact that he has some time to think of what to write gives him an opportunity to think of what language features to include in a paragraph. Unlike the speaker who uses simple coordinated constructions to get his message across, writers usually use complex grammatical structures such as subordinate clauses or nominalizations. Writers are thus said to use language features to "integrate information" though the language they use is said to be "detached" as it is different from that used in person-to-person interaction (Chafe 1982; Tannen 1982). In the latter, detached language, for example, interlocutors are able to use quotation marks or impersonal pronouns to express non-personal propositions. Chafe (1982:39) regards semantic features like modification which pertain to integration as associated with written language whereas fragmentation, which is a feature of spoken language, is said to involve idea units which "consist of a single clause, containing one predicative element (a verb or predicate adjective) and the noun phrases which are directly associated that element as subject, object. Conversational English and classroom discussions are replete with the latter features notably the beginning of

utterances with *and*, *as* in: *And I can see that in the first picture eeh it looks as if..., whereas* in written English the conjunction *and* would be omitted.

According to Chafe (1982) integration is achieved by nominalization, use of participles, attributive adjectives, conjoined phrases, prepositional phrases and relative clauses. On the other hand, written discourse is regarded as a language of "detachment" while spoken discourse is one of 'involvement'. The former is regarded as a "detached" discourse because of the non- interactive language features it employs such as the use of the passive voice and subordination, contrary to spoken discourse whose 'involvement' can be revealed by the use of such emphatic markers as *as*: *just*, *really* or *fuzzy* expressions or "vague completers" (Perera) like *and so on*, *something like*, *and sort of*. These words do not carry much propositional content apart from the fact that they may indicate the closing of a turn and signal that another turn is to follow. The fragmentation - integration, detachment- involvement continuum does not consist of watertight compartments as a speaker could adopt "integration" features as he is speaking and go back to fragmentation features depending on his audience and the purpose his production is expected to fulfill. However, it would seem that basic (elementary) writers are confined to the fragmentation-involvement end of the continuum and may have to wait until they reach high school or the university before they attain the integration-detachment end. Apparently, exposing pupils to all points along the continuum would be helpful. School writing still bind pupils to the fragmentation involvement end in the hope that this will lead automatically to the integration and detachment demanded in most school subjects. While the former may be easy to achieve through activities that still draw on the learner's linguistic repertoire acquired at home or learned at primary school, attaining the integration-detachment level may need intensive practice and reading based on various genres.

Table 3.1. The syntactic features of oral and written discourse

Oral discourse	Written discourse
Fragmented contextualized style depicted by	Integrated decontextualized style depicted by
(a) use of deictics (e.g. this one, that man, there)	(a) use of definite article to establish referent (e.g. The man is listening to the radio)
(b) linking together idea units without connectives or with loosely used conjunctions e.g. And so the man over there he is standing, So I think they know why she went	(b) packing together information by elaborate, semantic structures such as nominalizations, participles, using conjoined phrases, prepositional phrases, ellipsis, and relative clauses e.g. They came and went (cf. They came and then they went - Oral) e.g. The recent political developments have widespread implications for the economy (Nominalization) We hope the idea will be adopted with a view to safeguarding the interests of the peasants (Prepositional phrase). They went on digging in the rain (Participle)
(c) Deletion of relative clauses e.g. It was an idea I found interesting	It was an idea which I found quite interesting (Relative clause)
Involvement	Detachment
(a) Preferential use of First person or Second person pronoun e.g. You can see that in this picture John is painting.	(a) Preferential use of Subject-Predicate e.g. In this picture, John is painting.
(b) Preference for coordinate constructions, e.g. And the man with the pickup van drove along and knocked down the cyclist	(b) Preference for subordinate conjunctions, e.g. When the man with the pickup van came along, he knocked down the cyclist.
(c) Preference for active voice construction, e.g. She sent the file	(c) Preference for passive voice, e.g. The file was sent.
(d) Possible use of direct quotations, e.g. "Will you visit us next Sunday?"	(d) Use of indirect quotations (Reported), e.g. He requested him to visit them the following Sunday.
(e) Use of "emphatic particles" (Chafe 1982), e.g. <i>really, just</i> , as markers of inexplicitness or informality, e.g. I just don't understand what he means; He really wanted to involve us into the matter.	(e) Use of more explicit expressions: truly, hardly, e.g. The decision was truly satisfactory to all parties. I hardly know what he will say.
(f) Use of hedges (fuzzy words): at about something like, sort of, a kind of, and so on	(f) Specific hedges (Biber 1986): possibly, virtually, perhaps

Oral discourse	Written discourse
Simple sentences with more finite clauses than non-finite clauses e.g The boy drove recklessly; When they had finished the work they rested	Simple sentences with non-finite clause, e.g The boy came driving recklessly; After finishing the work they rested
More frequent use of wh-interrogative clauses e.g. I don't know what he will do; Do you understand what he said?	Less use of wh-interrogative clauses

The oral and written syntactic features shown in Table 3.1 are based on the works of Biber (1986); Chafe (1982); and Akinnaso (1982) as well as the author's experience with EFL/ESL learners. However, these features need to be verified with other findings because there seem to be some disagreements among researchers as regards which particular features pertain particularly to oral discourse and which ones pertain to written discourse. The disagreements have been attributed mainly to the different contexts in which the analysed data was collected as well as the texts that were analysed. As will be pointed out later, Beaman (1984) for example, found that contrary to what Chafe (1982) states, there were significantly more coordinated sentences in the written stories than in the spoken ones, which led him to argue that "neither the spoken nor the written narratives can be considered the more complex mode of discourse" (p.57). Beaman (1984) may not be offering a fair conclusion since he is assessing only one genre (narrative) whose written mode does not usually have complex syntactical structures. Comparisons of the spoken language and the written language of other genres could probably yield better data for comparison than that offered by Beaman.

### 3.3.3.1 The lexical features of spoken and written discourse

Research on the differences between speaking and writing seems to have concentrated on ascertaining the syntactical differences between them (O'Donnell 1974; Harris 1977; Cayer and Sacks 1979; Chafe 1982; Beaman 1984; Ochs 1979) rather than on lexical complexity. This may not be surprising in view of the fact that the audio-lingual method which laid primacy on speaking and later communicative teaching methodology which emphasizes the integration of all language skills, may have necessitated the need for unravelling the relationship between the two modes so as to help in preparing teaching material. Any attention paid to the lexical features of either of the two modes has usually involved counting the frequency of words. O'Donnell (1974); Chafe (1982); and Golub (1969) for instance were interested in the number of

words in spoken and written discourse and found that the latter had more words than the former. Akinnaso (1982) also cites a number of studies which come out with the same results and furthermore indicate that written discourse has longer words, more varied vocabulary and has generally shorter texts than spoken discourse. Reid (1990) was also able to find out from his study that writers used more content words in a writing task requiring comparing or contrasting than one requiring a description of a chart. He also found that the discourse mode of description served to elicit longer words and more function words - prepositions, articles, conjunctions and auxiliaries than the comparison/contrast task. He was able to establish that lexical density cannot only be related to mode (spoken or written) but has got also to be seen within the framework of the nature of the task in which one engages either orally or in writing.

Written language has more lexical density - the relationship between lexical (content) words such as nouns, adjectives and adverbs- and grammatical (function) words such as determiners, pronouns and preposition - than spoken discourse. (Halliday 1985; Carter 1987; Hammond 1990). Carter (1987) argues that because writing, unlike speaking, does not have an immediate physical context, it tends to use a higher proportion of lexical words to encode information. In doing so, written discourse depicts features of non-reciprocity since words like abstract nouns tend to distance the writer from the activity stated by the abstract noun and are illustrative of the state of divergence between the writer and his readers. Since the writer is engaged in some form of interaction with his readers, he has to find ways of creating some degree of convergence (Widdowson 1984) without necessarily reducing the effect his message is likely to have, by using expressions similar to those of spoken discourse such as: I think, I would think that, In my view etc. One of the aspects of divergence encountered in school subjects and in government documents and reports for example, is the over-use of the passive and abstract nouns (nominalizations), both of which tend to dissociate the doer from the discourse and subsequent actions that could follow. Hammond (1990:39) provides this example to highlight the point.

The familiarity sprang in part from the long standing interest in the operation of government and in policy issues among academics and researchers. Studies which had originally developed out of the work of political scientists, economist and others were now embraced by the emerging policy analysis perspective.(p.39)

The passage has words like familiarity, studies, the work and analysis nominalized which would in the spoken mode be mainly adjectives or verbs and which could

have rendered the first sentence for example into: It was familiar because academics and researchers had been interested for a long time in how governments operate (Hammond 1990:40). Nominalization is thus a feature of abstraction and is encountered in texts (mainly academic, scientific, technical, medical and legal) which tend to have a restricted audience. Crystal and Davy (1969) provide further illustrations of these features in their stylistic analysis of the language of newspaper reporting and the language of legal documents.

One of the salient features of lexis in spoken discourse is a repetition of words. This is particularly so among EFL learners since they do not have adequate vocabulary and tend therefore to go back to the same words or expressions. Repetition appears to be a way of linking one turn to another. EFL learners show features of L1 children's language because they tend to repeat words or previous clauses in speech because they lack alternative words. Repetition may, however, be a strategy for emphasizing a point as well as drawing the attention of the interlocutor to new words or expressions or for correcting the errors of the previous utterance as depicted in the following exchanges (see Appendix R, Transcript xxv)

- 0078aS6: [ I see that ] at my picture /dharaa/ a car which carry three boxes and I think  
-you say that at your picture you see the man who took the boxes I think that -  
is his boxes
- 0079S5: yes
- 0080S4: I think I think you are wron because I think that these boxes (S3 and S4  
laugh together) is the box of the driver drive the (.....)
- 0081S3: [car]
- 0081aS4: [car] and these boxes I think that when she is going that box drops
- 0082S3: [drop]
- 0082aS4 [drop] down and this man come come back to that-car oh see that the box  
is down
- 0083S4: [yaah]
- 0083aS4: [ and ] he stops his bicycle and come to the boxes and took them and I  
think-you see that at your picture-the driver stop-stop his car-OK OK I have  
explained so like this because-I think that is all I have seen because there are  
there is a man near that boxes [but] the car is beside that boxes

In this exchange, the interlocutor - particularly students S4 and S6 tend to repeat words and phrases they use in previous turns (self-repetition) or the words that a fellow interlocutor uses (other repetition). In turn 0078a, the interlocutor (S6) repeats the words I think not so much to emphasize the point as

to request confirmation of what he has said or to simply draw the attention of the interlocutor, although in this context repetition could also be a strategy of seeking a breathing space before the speaker has the opportunity to look for some words with which to express himself.

In turns 0081 and 0083 where the utterances "[car] and these boxes I think that when she is going that box drops" and "[and ] he stops his bicycle and come to the boxes and took them and I think-you see that at your picture..." appear, the expression I think does not seem to carry much meaning other than as an attention getter or device for continuing the conversation. The repetition of words is done for self-repair as in turn 0082 where the interlocutor (S3) seems to repeat the word down in "drop down" and in turn 0083, S4 corrects his earlier use of the locative there are by using the singular form there is instead as he talks about the man. On the other hand, the interlocutors also supply each other with words by completing previous utterances as in turns 0080 and 0081 in which the completion of the word car which S4's use of the word drop in "I think that when she is going that box drops" is realized as being incomplete without the adverbial particle down which S4 repeats.

Writing conventions require that the writer avoids repetitions by choosing words that explicitly convey the intended information. The writer could underline a word or enclose the additional information between brackets. There seems to be a tendency for the less able EFL learners to repeat words haphazardly whereas the more able writers repeat the whole phrase knowing that it is a grammatically correct construction but without realizing how monotonous the sentences are as will be shown in the second composition sample where the pupil begins almost all his sentences with adverbial clauses. Let us first have a look at the composition of a less competent pupil (Composition No. 66).

The one day there are four people. the once has a bicycle and the one *man* who stopping a man of the bicycle. Time not time the two policeman our stopping the *man*. The policeman ask the *man* why the bicycle is haven't a brack? What is that *man* just know ritun the police station. And the one day who *man* traying again to dreving the bicycle and a one motor car of policeman has see the *man* of bicycle and policeman is stop a motor car.

It is evident that the paragraph is reflective of the oral language the subject may have engaged in in a discussion prior to writing. One can note, for instance, the lack of proper punctuation, rambling sentences such as the long unpunctuated last sentence and the questions asked showing that the author is addressing



someone- albeit the absence of quotation marks in: The policeman ask the man why the bicycle is haven't a brack? What is that now, just know ritun the police station? in which the words ritun and stoping are written as pronounced. The repeated lexical items are: one day, man (x6), policeman, bicycle and motorcar.

A more competent writer (Composition No. 62) from the same group and writing on the same task also showed repetitions of lexical items but unlike the less competent pupil he repeats phrases or clauses which make his composition rather monotonous to read but he, unlike the previous less competent writer, organizes his thoughts logically through proper use of cohesive devices (conjunctions).

When the car continue with its motion and the man also was continuing with his notion on his bicycle. When the car continue moving the boxes on its back started to fall.

When the boxes fall over the tire and because they were heavy, they made a tire to fold.

When the man who was driving a car recognizing that the boxes were fallen, he stopped the car and get out.

Table 3.2. The lexical features of oral and written discourse

Oral	Written
Repetition of sound or lexical item (lexical reiteration) heard in previous turn or used in previous phrase or sentence e.g A. <i>I don't think</i> he really wishes to go. B. Oh no, <i>I don't think</i> he wants to.	Repetition of word or use of synonym or paraphrasing e.g The school needed a <i>vehicle</i> so they bought a <i>lorry</i> . This was quite <i>interesting</i> . It was <i>fascinating</i> .
Use of prominent (prosodic) features e.g intonation or stressed syllable to give effect to lexical items	Underlining or using capital letters e.g You <b>SHOULD</b> do as you are told.
Preference for ellipsis e.g "Can you do it?" "Yes, I can".	Preference for substitution e.g Which one of these is his? The green one.

The use of cohesive devices is crucial in determining the meaning of a sentence and in formulating and organizing discourse and showing relationships among ideas in both oral and written discourse. The ability to write well in school and to do well in school subjects, largely depends on how well the learner is able to employ cohesive devices to link his propositions. The difference between the able learners and the less able learners may, therefore, largely be due to the latter being unable to master the conventions of writing, which they have not been used to at home, or because they have not had adequate training at school to distinguish between school language, which is largely written despite its occasional oral form, and the home oral language.

### 3.3.4 Cohesion and coherence in oral and written language

#### 3.3.4.1 The concept of cohesion and coherence

Establishing a link between one proposition and another in an utterance or a sentence, is a prerequisite for a speaker or a writer to be understood. Propositions have something to say to a listener or the reader. They may explain something, elaborate, request or register a complaint. Propositions will therefore, express the function that language performs in a particular context. Linking them is brought about by syntactical and semantic devices such as conjunctions or repeating words and using anaphoric references (e.g it, him) and constitutes the *cohesion* of an utterance or a sentence. In speech, interlocutors may dispense with some cohesion devices by drawing on the pragmatic context and shared knowledge and yet understand each other as in this exchange in Widdowson's (1978:29) example:

A: That's the telephone

B: I'm in the bath

A: O.K

where there is no cohesion though the text is perfectly coherent. Writers, on the other hand, need to use cohesion devices to make the links between propositions understood. However, merely using a grammatical relationship to link sentences may not be enough unless we make the sentences which are linked make sense or say something. In other words, it is only by giving utterances or sentences an illocutionary value (Widdowson 1978) by the linguistic devices that we use, that we can make out what an utterance or sentence means.

Once we succeed in giving the proposition a meaning that readers can associate with what they know in day-to-day life, we are engaging in giving our text *coherence* or as Enkvist (1990:14) puts it: "a quality that makes a text conform to a consistent world picture and is therefore summarizable and interpretable". I would gather that by being "summarizable", Enkvist implies that the text can be broken down into units that are likely to be related to each other as in the sentence: When the company was established, it built the research centre because it wanted to carry out some research. If we ask the questions: When did the company build the research centre? Why did it build the research centre? Where did the company want to carry out some research?, we are bound to come up with answers which when brought together will tell us that the sentence is about the

company that established a research centre. It is however, the logical relationship between the sentences and the knowledge readers have of companies and research, that makes them understand that the sentence is coherent, since the words: company, established, centre seem to refer to a particular semantic relation or field, and are related to carry out and research.

Enkvist (1990:12) gives the following example to show that a text could have cohesion linking devices and yet not be coherent.

Susie left the howling ice cube in a bitter bicycle and it melted. It soon tinkled merrily in her martini. Into her drink she then also poured the grand piano she had boiled in a textbook of mathematics the night before. She chewed the martini, read the olive and went to bed. But first she took her clothes off. She then took her clothes off.

In view of the fact that the sentences fail to provide a consistent scenario, it is neither easy to sum up the theme nor provide a proper interpretation of the story. Though part of the incoherence of this text is no doubt due to the lack of lexical cohesion. This is in marked contrast to the following short paragraph about football (Enkvist 1990:12)

The net bulged with the lightning shot. The referee blew his whistle and signalled. Smith had been offside. The two captains both muttered something. The goalkeeper sighed with relief.

The above short paragraph, despite lacking cohesive devices, other than lexical ones, particularly the anaphoric devices that would relate referents to previous sentences, can be easily summarized as telling about football and be easily interpreted as referring to a goal that was disallowed. The words *net*, *referee*, *blew his whistle*, *offside*, *captain*, and *goalkeeper*, all relating to football are enough to tell us what the paragraph is about.

Widdowson (1978) states that an incoherent text can be distinguished from a coherent one by its placing a strain on the readers before they can understand it - as the above text on Susie and the "howling" ice cube - since it does not conform to the readers' experiences. Conformity to some well known conventions in one's society or culture - or beyond one's culture if one is writing on a topic likely to be read worldwide, appears to be a prerequisite for achieving coherence. As Widdowson (1978:45) puts it

Coherence, then, is measured by the extent to which a particular instance of language use corresponds to a shared knowledge of conventions as to how illocutionary acts are related to form larger units of different kinds.

Knowledge of the illocutionary acts (functions performed by language through speech acts such as greeting, requesting, complaining etc.) as I pointed out, will be determined not only by how well one is able to use language devices (including cohesion devices) to request, explain, or elaborate, but also by one's knowledge of the genre and the register that is used.

The importance of cohesion and coherence in both oral and written discourse, shows that expecting children to write compositions well simply because they have learned to use grammatical devices, may be unrealistic. Pupils could know how to combine sentences using a variety of conjunctions, but unless they are able to do this in continuous prose which enables them to link events and provide logical information, they will continue to write paragraphs that do not make sense. The role of cohesion and coherence in writing, shows that knowledge of the language is not enough. It must be accompanied by knowledge of the world which derives from the child's experience and what he continues learning at school and within his environment.

#### **3.3.4.2 Cohesion devices and writing**

A few studies have tried to explore the differences between cohesion in oral language at home and cohesion in story books and in the writing of children so as to find out the impact which the child's transition from the predominantly oral language of the home to the mainly written language of the school has on his ability to organize thoughts and relate ideas in sentences. DeStefano and Kantor (1988) and DeStefano (1991) examined cohesion in the spoken dialogues of black and Appalachian children in the United States. They collected data from the children's dialogues with their mothers at home and compared it with the children's written language which was based on basal reader stories. They then analysed the spoken dialogue and the written text on the basis of cohesion devices. The findings from their studies showed that spoken dialogue was different in cohesion pattern from the written discourse found in the children's story books. Children's story book dialogue (written) contained far more cohesive ties than the oral dialogue. DeStefano was also able to establish that the children's cohesive devices (mostly reiteration) matched those of the teacher's wh-questions thus showing how classroom interaction can affect the cohesion devices used by the learners.

Fine (1985) conducted a study in which subjects were told to read, recall what they had read and later tell a story. The results of the study showed that disabled readers used mostly additive conjunctions but were unable to use

other conjunctions like temporal, causal and adversative conjunctions (Halliday and Hasan 1976) which are more crucial than additives in explaining the relationship between ideas and in elaborating or stating reasons. Disabled readers also used less substitution and ellipsis cohesion than the able readers and they also used references (pronouns) ambiguously, showing that they had failed to establish a relationship with their audience in writing and that they lacked appropriate written discourse conventions. Hidi and Hildyard (1983) and Hildyard and Hidi (1982) compared oral and written language based on a story and found that although the written protocols were significantly shorter than the oral protocols, they were marginally more cohesive than the oral production. However, there was no significant difference between the oral language and the written products in terms of length, number of ideas and the frequency of the lexical items. The selection of particular words (word types) was also found to be the same. However, there was a greater incidence of the use of conjunctions in the oral protocols particularly the additive and, than in the written texts. In their study of EFL speakers, Tyler et al (1988) were able to establish that EFL learners often use discourse markers wrongly not only in writing but also in speech. Tyler et al were able to find out that while speaking, several of the subjects studied overused discourse markers like: so, however, but, inserting them in places where they were not needed and making them not carry any propositional meaning. Tyler et al (1988) give this example from their data to illustrate their point.

These four countries have (a) one common aspect, that they are located in East Asia. BUT, during the 1960s when they started economic growth, they adopted some kind of trade policy.

The word "but" above does not, apparently, create any adversative semantic link between the first sentence and the second and its omission would not lessen the meaning of the second sentence though it is possible that an additive conjunction could be put in its place. A further example from the transcript of my data (see Appendix R Transcript xxxiii) may serve to highlight the problem facing EFL learners in their choice of cohesion devices.

0015S3: you can see the ring

001S1: yes the ring it [got]

0017aS3: [ it is already broken]

0018S1: yes already broken and so I think when /.../ it got a medicine after it got a medicine - he must a he [must]

0018aS2: [repair]

0019S1: but myself want to ask a question about me picture - the first picture

The cohesive links *and so* (turn 0018) and *but* (turn 0020) are unnecessary and could have been left out altogether without adversely affecting the meaning of the utterance. The words seem merely to signal the continuation of the discourse or to act as a signal that another interlocutor wishes to take the floor. This paragraph taken from the writing of one of the pupils taking part in the task involving S1 and S3 above, illustrates how the inappropriate use of cohesion devices gets transferred to writing.

On the pictures shows when people is doing. First of all their people one have a bicycle coming back on a car and a car moving on a load on a car have a boy who driving and this car his putting...

It is evident that proper use of cohesion first in spoken discourse and secondly in writing, is useful, just as is the ability of pupils to know that whereas in spoken discourse cohesion devices may serve a pragmatic function and express a certain meaning to an interlocutor, in writing the same cohesion device might be redundant and dysfunctional. However, since words are contained in sentences, they can only make sense if seen within the framework of syntactical features of sentences.

### **3.4 Review of research and implications for this study**

#### **3.4.1 Studies on oral and written language**

As I pointed out in Section 3.3.3.1, much of the research on the differences between oral discourse and written discourse seems to have centred on the syntactical features of the two modes (Golub 1969; O'Donnell 1974; Poole and Field 1976; Harris 1977; Cayer and Sacks 1979; Ochs 1979; Chafe 1982). The results of these studies have not been similar in all cases. While Chafe (1982) and O'Donnell (1974) found that writing involves more complex syntactical features than speaking, Poole and Field (1976) Halliday (1979) and Beaman (1984) found that speaking depicts more complex syntactical features than writing. The differences in these results appear to be more an outcome of the differences in the administration of data for these studies than a result of the differences of the modality. O'Donnell (1974) for instance, based his findings on a television programme in which a speaker responded to questions and later wrote on the same subject in a newspaper column. On the other hand, Poole and Field (1976) based their data on Bernstein's (1971) concept of elaborated and restricted codes but their spoken task appeared to be more difficult than the written one. Chafe (1982) compared informal dinner table talk and academic writing.

Although O'Donnell (1974) for example, argues that his spoken sample and his written sample were similar because "they represent an individual's public expression of ideas on a variety of topics of general concern" (p.105), the fact that they generated language features under different circumstances may cast doubt on the comparability of the results. In O'Donnell's case for example, we cannot be certain whether or not an individual will be able to remember all that he spoke after some time. As regards Chafe's data the fact that the written data was collected in a highly formal situation and the spoken data in a highly informal context, makes one wonder whether they could be comparable and form the basis for drawing general conclusions regarding the differences of the two modes. Most of the studies on speaking and writing have been conducted among native speakers of English and it may not be quite true to state that the results could apply to EFL speakers whose linguistic forms and usage might not adequately approximate those of native speakers to form the basis for comparison. Both Akinnaso (1982) and Biber (1986) see the problem of drawing general conclusions from these studies as arising from the collection of data rather than the modalities themselves and they also envisage that these studies fail to ascertain how communicative tasks performed in the two modes are accomplished. They argue that subordination features for instance, may serve different functions in different texts and hence "more detailed study of subordination features as they function in different text types is required before final conclusions can be drawn concerning their overall distribution and functions" (Biber 1986:409). The fact that comparison between spoken data and written data has been made by studies using different procedures for collecting data, does not however, invalidate the salient features which have been detected concerning the syntactical patterns of oral and written discourse. Attention will be drawn to the syntactical features as they pertain to composition writing. Perera (1986) offers a comprehensive account of the difference between the grammar of speaking and that of writing by basing her examples on the collected from monolingual English speaking children (see Table 3.3)

Written discourse is said to be more formal and explicit than spoken discourse because written discourse is devoid of those features of spoken English which would make the text less explicit. One of these features of explicitness in writing are the syntactical features that make a text less redundant such as the non-finite subordinate clauses such as: After paying the bill I went back home or She all the time thought of going to train as a doctor. Perera (1986) found that there were twice as many of these non-finite constructions in the written data of her sample than in the spoken data. The use of passive voice is seen by Chafe (1982) as another

feature of detachment and integration since in using the passive voice, the writer distances himself from the state of events. It is perhaps because of this that the passive voice gets acquired late by children and needs to be taught more at school than at home as it is encountered in school language.

It has been pointed out in the preceding section that the physically social context of the oral mode makes speech rely less on grammatical features such as cohesion than on prosodic features such as intonation and stress, as well as non-linguistic features such as gestures, although highly formal spoken language could still be marked by as much grammatical cohesion as writing. Very few studies have attempted to examine the impact of different tasks in which oral language was used on the lexical and syntactical features. Studies on the impact of the variation of tasks on language features have mainly involved written language. I would imagine that it might be because there are few academic contexts where oral language gets used by pupils whereas written language predominates in academic, legal and scientific literature.

One of the few studies on oral language, though not directly related to the analysis of language features, has been that of Meyer and Freedle (1984). This study hinged on the role of schemata on discourse and how they affect students' recall of tasks requiring comparison/contrasts and descriptions before they write. In this study, the students first listened to a passage and then tried to recall what they had listened to before writing. The written products were later scored for idea units recalled as well as the discourse type subjects used to organize their protocol. The study is interesting in the sense that it involves remembering what was said and thus it involves inputs from the spoken language as well as the written mode. A comparison in which the child is making comparisons between two things requires the child to have a comparison schema to enlist what he sees as similarities or differences. On the other hand, if he is writing a narrative, he needs to have a schema of how to start the story by an *orientation* (introducing the characters and the setting) which should be followed by a *complication* phase depicting a series of events and a problem, and a *resolution* phase during which problems get resolved. The story is then expected to end by the writer expressing his attitude or making an evaluation of events or happenings, a phase known as the *coda* (Christie 1986; Martin and Rothery 1986).



### **3.4.2 The impact of genre on writing**

A comparison schema and a narrative one will differ on the basis of complexity depending on whether the child is for instance, comparing school buildings or whether he is comparing urban life and rural life. This will also entail the use of different language features. Meyer and Freedle's (1984) results show that subjects listening to the comparison passage answered significantly more questions correctly a week after hearing the passage than those who listened to the description passage. This study shows that recall of information involving comparison was superior to that of description. It could mean that children who might have hitherto been much more used to comparing things than merely saying what they are, may have been constrained by the pressure of listening as well as the discourse of description with which they were unfamiliar. Although the study does not detail the linguistic features required by the two tasks, it demonstrates that prior background knowledge determines what the child is able to remember and write down even before he strives for words or grammar with which to express his ideas.

The study by Pellegrini, Galda and Rubin (1984) looked into the impact of discourse on the language features of both oral and written discourse involving persuasion (arguments). The major findings of this study was that the writing channel elicited more conjunctions than the oral channel because of the opportunity writers were afforded to organize thoughts in written discourse. Within written discourse, it was found that narratives elicited more words and grammatical cohesion than persuasive essays, probably because of the writers' mastery of narrative schema and also as Pellegrini et al explain, because of the pictorial verbal stimuli that may have provided the learners with an opportunity to explain what they saw. I will be presenting in the following chapter, details of how classroom discourse is likely to affect and to be affected by oral tasks and writing tasks that learners do and how this may subsequently affect their results.

#### **3.4.2.1 Mode, Genre and language**

As I have pointed out in Section 3.3.3.1, there are more studies on the impact of writing tasks on linguistic features than there are related to oral tasks. It is unfortunate, however, that hardly any of these are on EFL/ESL writers. A few of the studies on the writing tasks, have tried to explore the language features of various social contexts such as social science, natural science and academic journals (Grabe 1987) among writers of various cultural groups but most of the studies have been involved with expressive or explanatory writing (Praeter and

Padia 1983); persuasive writing (Crowhurst 1980; Crowhurst and Piche 1979); or the impact of audience on syntactic complexity (Crowhurst and Piche 1983; Kroll 1990). Kroll (1990) found that better performance, measured by syntactical complexity, was obtained when students wrote at home than when they wrote at school, thus showing that both the teacher's presence (as audience) as well as the time constraint due to the specific time allocated to essay writing, affect the pupils' performance. Reid (1990) attempted to look into how variation in tasks affects the lexical and syntactical features. One of the tasks he assigned required students to make comparisons and contrasts and the other required them to make a graph and interpret it. Reid (1990) found that students used significantly more words in describing a graph than in comparing, contrary to the study of Meyer and Freedle (1984) probably suggesting that there might be other factors such as age and the social context which affect the results, though neither Freedle and Meyer (1984) nor Reid (1990) mentions them. Reid (1990) found further that there was a higher percentage of content words (nouns, adjectives, adverbs and non-auxiliaries) in the comparison/ contrast task compared to the descriptive task.

The results of these studies reveal salient differences in language features due to variations of writing task. However, they cannot be generalized because interpreting a graph may be influenced by one's cultural ideological outlook and could also bring about linguistic differences as one encodes ideas differently from another and thus uses different linguistic features. A difference in age among subjects has also been found to bring about differences in the language features used in writing tasks (O'Donnell 1974; Perera 1986). O'Donnell (1974) for instance, found that the average length of T- units (measured by the presence of an independent clause and other dependent clauses) was significantly greater in speech than in writing among third graders but the T- units were longer in the writing rather than the speech of higher graders. Perera (1986) on the other hand, found that at the age of 10 and 12, children generally use a wider range of structuring devices such adverbial clauses and are conscious of the grammatical resources available for use in writing, thus underscoring the importance age or class (grade) may have on the learners' language acquisition and language performance (see Table 3.3) in speech and writing.

Table 3.3. Temporal (Time) adverbials used by 8 year old, 10 year old and 12 year old children (From Perera 1986: 105)

	Speech			Writing		
	8 yrs	10 yrs	12 yrs	8 yrs	10 yrs	12 yrs
then	+	+	+	+	+	+
when +finite cl.		+	+	+	+	+
first		+	+	+	+	+
first of all		+	+	+	+	+
at/in the end		+	+		+	+
after + finite clause					+	+
after that				+	+	+
after + NP				+	+	+
soon						+
at the start						+
last of all						+
secondly						+
next						+
sometimes						+
in time						+
at the time						+
straight away						+
to begin with						+
while + finite clause						+
after + non-finite clause						+
in the beginning						+
afterwards						+
eventually						+
finally						+
at last						+
on the third go						+
before + finite clause						+
once + finite clause						+

It is apparent from Table 3.3, that as children mature, they are able to exploit more sophisticated linguistic features in writing than those they use in speaking, possibly due to their interaction with adults if they are native speakers of the language and/or due to exposure to the language through reading books and listening to the teacher. It will be seen for example, that the temporal adverbials: in the beginning, afterwards, eventually, finally, at last, on the third go, and the adverbials before/once+finite clauses are used by 12 year old children but not by 8

year old children and not by 10 year old children either. Whereas the 12 year old are able to use a variety of four types of temporal adverbials, (then, when, first, first of all) in speech, they use almost twice as many of these adverbial in writing as in speech, adding further to the list the adverbials: after + finite clause, after that, and after + NP. Since the children surveyed were writing on the Lego constructions they had made, one can regard the comparison between the oral language used and the written language as a valid one, though I would tend to think that they might have had more time to think of words to write than they did while speaking in front of the interviewer.

Although Perera's study may not be universally applicable as it was conducted among native speakers of English, certain language features observed may be discerned in the language of non-native speakers. The fact that the study shows that learners acquire a variety of language features as they mature, indicates that teachers need to be patient with the pace of their pupils' learning but still offer more challenge and support to the learners so that the earlier the learners get exposed to a variety of syntactical structures, the easier it will be for them to become familiar with them as they mature. Secondly, the fact that pupils in this survey, show much more rapid increase in the variety of temporal connectives in writing than in speech, means that both reading and writing can start at an early age without waiting until the pupils are older. This will help to expose the learners to different types of writing and so develop their skills in the writing of various genres. An attempt will be made in the next chapter to ascertain how different writing tasks are likely to affect the language of the learners and how they could also be affected by the interactional patterns that develop in the classroom. However it may be that in the Tanzanian situation the level of maturity of secondary school pupils takes them into a different category even though their linguistic knowledge may not match their cognitive maturity.

### **3.5 Implications of oral and written language differences for the teaching and learning of composition writing.**

An awareness of the differences between speaking and writing by teachers and learners, has implications for the teaching and learning of composition writing as well as the preparation of teaching materials. One of these implications concerns the stages at which teachers may exploit the exclusive use of oral language and when they may find that they have to integrate both or expose their pupils only to written language.

Kroll (1981) proposes a developmental model of writing which is based on the relationship between writing and speaking. Kroll's developmental model is in four stages: the *preparation* stage, the *consolidation* stage, the *differentiation* stage and the *systematic integration* stage. During the preparation stage, children learn the technical skills which enable them to represent written symbols. At this stage, talking and writing are separate and oral language is more developed than writing. This is a stage prevalent in nursery school and the first years of primary school. The consolidation stage is the stage during which the child relies heavily on speech for writing. Writing and speaking are closely integrated and writing is presented by the child as if it is simply "talk written down". This is apparently, a stage when children write upper and low case characters, somewhat similar to drawing. The differentiation is said to be a stage when children learn to differentiate between oral and written language in terms of their structure and style and is a stage when children are said to be conscious of the formality and explicitness of written language and the inexplicit and casual nature of speaking. During the systematic integration stage, speaking and writing are systematically differentiated. The writer can adapt speech or writing to different contexts, audiences and purposes. These stages are not linear and Kroll (1981) is right in regarding them as "cyclical and multidimensional" because depending on his ability and the context in which learning takes place, a pupil could be in both the preparation and the consolidation stage at the same time. Most secondary school pupils may be said to be midway between the differentiation stage and the systematic integration stage, the latter being likely to be attained by very few pupils in Form Two and Form Three, but likely to be attained by high school and university students.

The implications of the developmental model for the teaching of writing is that the model seems to be in consonance with the Britton et al (1975) typology of writing based on the Poetic-Expressive-Transactional continuum, since during the consolidation stage for example, the pupil draws chiefly on oral language as at primary school and during the early years of secondary school, expressive writing, which fosters the child's consciousness and his relationship with his listeners and readers needs to be encouraged at this stage. Not only can the child learn story writing but he can also write personal letters. Britton et al (1975) regard expressive speech - and subsequently expressive writing - as a bridge between speaking and writing and a vital preparation for the latter. As Britton et al (1975) state about the expressive function of discourse:

Expressive speech is language close to the speaker: what engages his attention is fully verbalized, and as he presents his views of things, his loaded commentary upon the world, so he also presents himself (p. 207)

The time EFL/ESL learners need to engage in expressive writing may be longer than other stages because this is the stage when not only their language but also their cognitive power which is vital for transactional writing, needs to be developed. One of the ways of making writing close to speaking might be to assign exercises which help to tap the child's speaking potential. The exercise might, therefore, involve both speaking and writing. There is however, a need to exercise care in assigning these exercises since I do not think that all exercises need oral preparation before writing. Talking as a preparation for writing might prove useful in a narrative task for example or in a descriptive task which requires pupils to find the differences between pictures but it might not work in another exercise involving pupils talking about their school about which they know already since they may not have any new information to exchange. Another way of bringing writing close to speaking would be to have class and school debates and let pupils write what has been deliberated on in those debates. In this way pupils might be exposed to the language of debate which can be made informal if the topic is based on something interesting and simple, and so lead to informal language in writing.

The differences between tasks has been seen to have an impact on the language features of both speaking and writing. This has implications for teaching. Teachers need to choose topics which enable their pupils to make use of their background knowledge though this does not mean that they should only test that which the pupils know. Pupils might also choose their own topics although the problem with this is that in a situation where teaching is conducted on the basis of the syllabus, the topics chosen by pupils may conflict with those prescribed by the syllabus. The fact that schools and institutions should continue to dictate what should be learned at the primary school and secondary school levels may run counter to some theories of education which advocate learner-centredness but it may be a fact we have to live with in a real world where learners will continue to be dictated to by other institutions on all sorts of facets of life. What is important is to give pupils, especially at secondary level, as wide a choice as possible of what to write on and seek the assistance of teachers of other subjects in those areas of English in which knowledge of different genres is required. The writing of other genres could, conceivably be done when the pupils have attained the systematic integration stage, possibly

in Form Three or Four and certainly in high school and beyond. Kroll (1981: 53) states that at the stage

when oral and written resources are systematically integrated rather than simply consolidated, a person can make *choices* within a flexible, organized system of choices, registers, and styles - choices which are appropriate for the purpose, audience and context of communication.

The transition from integration to differentiation is crucial in determining the pupil's progress in the later, more complicated systematic integration phase. Reading widely could help pupils to explore for themselves how the language encoded in books other than story books, differs from that of casual talk. One of the strategies for promoting integration in speaking and writing in the United States is *dialogue journal writing* which involves teachers and pupils exchanging notes on a wide range of issues most of which are informational in nature. The pupil writes and the teacher responds and vice-versa. The aim of dialogue journal writing is said to be to make writing interactive (Shuy 1987; Kreeft 1984; 1987; Staton and Shuy 1987). By asking pupils questions, teachers expect answers and pupils expect teachers' replies to their written questions. Writing thus becomes dialogic and a negotiation of meaning and is analogous to the turn taking that takes place in speaking. However, while the aim of dialogue-journal writing is well predisposed towards promoting interaction the way it is conducted has a few flaws. I see 'authentic' oral interaction, which as we saw in Chapter Two the child has been used to from home, as vital but lacking in dialogue journal communication. While it is true that the teacher and the pupils engage in communicative acts - giving information and opinions, asking and answering questions, requesting explanation and clarifications - the lack of person-to-person communication between the teacher and the pupil divests the latter of the need to see how he can construct knowledge through oral communication with his teacher and subsequently in writing. Secondly, dialogue journal communication does not seem to hinge on topics that the writer is likely to meet in examinations or in real life.

Since examinations still form a major criterion of assessment, pupils still need to write on topics required by examining bodies and those pupils will find useful in their professional careers. Another feature of writing advocated in the United States is *conference writing* whose chief proponent is Graves (1983). In conference writing, pupils plan, revise and later edit together what they have written down. Perhaps the only criticism about this is the fact that the teacher

does not play a part and students are left to their own devices with interactions taking place mainly after the pupil has embarked on the task and as Painter (1986) states, like dialogue journal communication it lacks the parent-child dialogue aspect which could serve as a bridge "between the child's previous interactional experience and the classroom" (p.87). Moreover, the fact that conferencing involves pupils writing first and then talking later about what they have written implies that those taking part in the conference already have a fair knowledge of English and hence EFL learners of low language competence would probably find it difficult to take part in such conferences.

The fact that some studies have indicated that an age factor may have an impact on the way the child is able to structure language suggests that attention should be paid to the way compositions are taught to children of varying ages or differing classes. Perera (1986) in her study found that 8 year old children were able to use the temporal conjunctions then and when in both speech and writing. However, they were unable to use the constructions after+finite clause or the temporal expression first of all in speech and these features were only discernible in writing. On the other hand, only the 12 year old children were able to use temporal adverbs finally, eventually, in the beginning, in their writing. Waiting until children are in their twelfth year as is the case in Perera's study or until they are towards the end of junior secondary school in Tanzania (usually at the age of 17 or 18 ) may not help as it would be delaying their acquisition of structures which they might find useful later in their studies. What could probably be done is to get pupils used to using/seeing structures of language in continuous writing, which is likely to provide a wide range of structures, rather than rewriting sentences which are confined to specific structures. Reading out aloud to pupils and also letting pupils read out loud to each other could provide the pupils with an opportunity to encounter expressions they might find useful later in the writing of their compositions.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

An attempt has been made in this chapter to highlight the differences between oral discourse and written discourse. The chapter began by explaining the importance of understanding the role of social interaction and literacy in cognitive development, since an awareness of the significance of literacy for social and cognitive development, may help us to understand the constraints the child faces as he moves from the contextualized oral mode to the decontextualized written mode. The cognitive and linguistic constraints the child encounters as he shifts from the oral mode were then pointed out. Since



moving into the decontextualized language system entails understanding the lexical and syntactical system of both language systems, an attempt was made to highlight the main differences between speaking and writing. An attempt was then made to highlight the fact that the lack of a physical context in writing and hence the context-independent nature of writing, makes it necessary for writing to use lexico-grammatical resources to encode meaning in the text unlike speaking which could exploit the same grammatical features as those used in writing but has the added advantage of using non-linguistic features such as gestures to carry the message across. The interactive aspect of speaking and the non-interactive aspect of writing have an impact on the lexico-grammatical features used. Two pieces of work are salient in this regard, the work of Ochs (1979) who highlights the planned nature of writing and the unplanned nature of speaking as being crucial to the discourse and the language generated in the two modes and the work of Chafe (1982) on the language of spoken and written discourse. The planned aspect of writing is seen as enabling the writer to organize his thoughts and language. Ochs (1979) seems to have in mind native speakers of English when he states this because EFL/ESL learners faced with the linguistic and cognitive demands of what to write may not benefit from the planned nature of writing at all especially in the frequent and usual situation when a specific time is allocated to pupils in the classroom for writing their compositions.

Writing and speaking place different demands on language because of the different purposes and functions of each mode, just as different discourse types in writing call for variations in the language. Children come to school with limited schemata oriented mostly towards the narrative in view of the dominant role which story telling and narrating has at home. Learning other schemata without the support of the teacher may not be easy. Teachers of other subjects may thus be required to provide support to English teachers by explicitly instructing pupils in the genres specific to other school subjects. The pupils' moving from the purely oral mode to the written mode, when the pupil is almost independent, has implications for the way we set tasks in the classroom as the tasks we set have to tap the resources of both the oral language and the written language.

Since it is inevitable that the prominence of writing will continue to prevail in schools as "a permanent and visible product on the basis of which teachers will perforce make considerable judgments about the success with which the students have learned" (Christie 1985: 38), there is a need to place emphasis

on writing but at the same time continue to use oral language as a conduit through which competence in writing can be attained since right from infancy, children use oral language to construct meaning. Wells (1981:269) has this to say about integrating the oral language (discussions) and the written language, particularly at the early stages of the child's writing.

With the transition to school there must inevitably be changes in the relationship between child learner and adult 'helper', since one of the chief aims of schooling is to help the child to transcend the limitations of thinking which is tied to the context of immediate practical activity. The teacher will thus wish to channel the child's interests and encourage him to engage in tasks which require him to master new skills for obtaining, organizing and utilizing information, and to become more reflective in his approach to problem solving.

Studies on the differences between speaking and writing have not adequately addressed themselves to EFL/ESL learners. It would be interesting for instance, to find out how EFL/ESL learners perceive the shift from speaking to writing and whether or not a shift from speaking in L1 to writing in the same language (L1) affects writing in different or in much the same way as a shift from L2 speaking to L2 writing.

An attempt has been made to show that the oral language which the child uses to interact with adults and his environment, does not differ much from that of his written language but could be used as a basis on which writing can be developed. The comparisons between oral and written language are thus not meant to depict the two modes as oppositional but merely serve to underscore the fact that we can exploit the similarities and differences between the two modes and act upon them to develop the child's writing potential. The next chapter will now be concerned with the role of discourse in writing by considering how the interactions that takes place in the classroom and the communicative acts employed, can be used to give writing a social context and to show that writing involves a negotiation of meaning in which both cognitive and social factors play a part.

The opportunities children are given to use language at school could determine how much of the oral or written language they are able to learn at school and how this is to help them in their performance. Collins and Michaels' (1986) study on the relationship between classroom discourse and the acquisition of literacy might be worth citing before we move to the next chapter. Collins and Michaels (1986) studied how cohesion was achieved by black working class children and middle class white children in both oral and written narratives.

They found that whereas white children - who apparently interacted more with their teachers than their black counterparts did - used a variety of lexical and syntactical devices to attain cohesion, the black children used mostly prosodic cues. When white children used complex nominal syntax as well as lexical and syntactical devices to identify characters, the black children used high-rise intonational features to define characters or events. In other words, the black children had to resort to employing the strategies they used at home to compensate for the lexical and syntactical features they failed to use. Collins and Michaels (1986) also found that the black children confined themselves to using verbal complements rather than the noun complements used by white children. They also found that although both groups tended to make use of prosodic features in their oral narratives to give prominence to some content, the way they exploited these features differed, and was reflective of their differing skills. Whereas the black children shifted their stresses on words, the white children tended to show regularized stress patterns on the last content words close to clause boundaries which happened to be words comprising the theme of the content.

The white subjects in the above study may have been exposed to a much more literate environment at home than the black children and could have acquired such conversational strategies at home. However, the fact that none of the black children was able to emulate their white counterparts, could be due to socio-cultural reasons but could also be attributed to the infrequency of interacting with their teachers and practising language in the classroom.

Teacher-student interactions have thus, a bearing on how and when the child makes the transition to written discourse. If the prosodic and syntactical features the child comes with to school do not match those of the school and the child becomes passive or is made to become a passive participant in the classroom, it will take him a long time before he masters the written language. We cannot lay the blame for the child's failure to master the written language entirely on the teacher's doorstep, since there may be other factors such as the size of the class and the shortage of teaching materials, which impinge on the teacher's attempt to promote a more interactional environment in the classroom, further polarizing the differences among the learners. Collins and Michaels (1986:222) aptly state this when they assert that

What differences in discourse style do is introduce an additional factor into an already complex classroom setting. Moreover, this pattern of disharmonious interaction results in a pattern of differential treatment

and negative evaluation. These in turn, diminish the student's access to the kind of instruction and practice necessary for the acquisition of literacy.

The next chapter will therefore, be addressed to the nature of classroom discourse and how classroom interactions and the tasks that are set in the classroom, can provide a basis for the child to learn written discourse skills and be enabled to engage in classroom tasks that require his employing more of the written language than the oral language.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **CLASSROOM DISCOURSE AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE: A FUNCTIONAL AND INTERACTIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Any attempt to ascertain the extent to which second/foreign language learners have mastered a language, has got to take into account their ability to get a message across and to be understood by both teachers and classmates. One of the problems which teachers face when listening to their pupils or marking their written compositions is as regards teachers being able to make out what their pupils are trying to get across as they are trying to describe something or to put forward an opinion. A pupil's ability to show clearly that he is explaining, hypothesizing or justifying his assertions is thus one of the main factors which contribute to his communicative competence and his subsequent success at school. Being able to express oneself clearly, entails being able to use words and expressions that will perform a particular function; a situation which calls for employing knowledge of the subject matter being talked or written about, as well as knowledge of the culture of the intended audience.

In Chapter Two, I pointed out the great contribution made by Halliday (1975) to language learning by his typology of language functions. Halliday's typology forms a basis on which the needs of both oral and written language by the child can be described. In speaking as well as in writing, one is consciously or unconsciously, using language to carry out the instrumental, regulatory, interactional, personal, heuristic, imaginative or informative functions envisaged by Halliday. The speaker's or writer's use of any of these functions can only be realized through the words he utters or writes down. The words thus uttered or written down constitute the speech acts or linguistic expressions that show how language is used to achieve a communicative goal in a particular context. While holding a conversation, one may ask his interlocutor a question, request information, request clarification of content or respond to his interlocutor's question. One might also in the same conversation elaborate on what the interlocutor states and even make a promise to help him or to carry out an action. What we do with words in speaking or writing will, therefore, determine the extent to which we succeed or fail to communicate and how in so doing, we are able to persuade others to carry out certain actions or to regulate their behaviour. An understanding of what function or intended meaning the writer's words are likely to carry, is particularly crucial to a writer, who in view of the

physical absence of his intended readers, has to make himself as clear as possible so that his readers understand him.

#### **4.2 Communicative functions and second language acquisition: the role of speech acts**

The last two decades have seen an increasing interest in the understanding of and relating of speech acts to language learning. One of the landmarks of communicative teaching methodology for instance, has been the introduction of the Notional Functional Syllabus based on the communicative functions of language such as greeting, promising or expressing a wish. The increasing need for teaching language for use rather than as the learning of language forms which one may not put to use, has enhanced the need for understanding the functions performed by utterances or pieces of discourse in spoken and written language. The significance of the role of speech acts has also got to be seen within the context of second language acquisition theories which conceive of the oral language used by children during the early stages of their growth as essentially directed towards achieving their needs and therefore being basically instrumental (Halliday 1975; Bruner 1975; Hatch 1978; 1983; Dore 1978; Snow 1983; Dimitracopoulou 1990). I will attempt to examine the role of speech acts in language acquisition later after giving a survey of the general functions of language. Attention will be focused briefly on what speech acts are and how they are classified, chiefly on the basis of Searle's (1969; 1975) typology. I will then focus on how children draw on speech acts to communicate both during pre-verbal and during the verbal stages and then attempt to explore the relationship between the communicative functions and the linguistic forms which arise when the speech acts are employed.

Since classroom discourse differs from informal discourse in the sense that the former is constrained by rules governing the conduct of lessons and characterized by an asymmetrical relationship between the teacher and pupils, it will be appropriate to examine speech acts in classroom discourse and later assess them against the background of student- student interactions. It might be interesting for instance, to ascertain the nature as well as the types of speech acts that characterize student- student interactions vis-a -vis speech acts prevailing in teacher-student discourse, just as it might be interesting to ascertain which of these speech acts could be said to help substantially in sustaining a discourse and later help in writing. The speech acts will then be related to writing by looking into how writers are able to organize their thoughts

and the speech acts and language features they are likely to draw on to encode ideas and language.

#### **4.2.1 Classification of speech acts**

##### **4.2.1.1 Austin's taxonomy of Speech Acts**

Speech Act theory derives from Austin (1962) who envisaged that utterances or sentences involve the performance of acts which he called performatives e.g. I baptize you John; I declare this building opened for the Trade Fair. Performing a speech act involves a *locutionary act* which is the act of intentionally saying something while the *illocutionary act* is the doing of something by means of a locutionary act and thus trying to achieve some communicative purpose. A person by virtue of his position as a teacher, might issue an order that a pupil without uniform should go out by shouting "Out" or a landowner might issue a warning by putting a board on his plot of land which reads "Trespassers will be prosecuted". By uttering the sentences they perform an illocutionary act. I am not going to dwell lengthily on the classification of speech acts. The reader could well consult Austin (1962); Searle (1969;1976); Sinclair and Coulthard (1975); Coulthard (1977); Labov and Fanshel (1977); Stubbs (1983); and Ferrara (1985) for details. However, it is worth pointing out that Austin's taxonomy includes the following acts: *Verdictives*, *Exercitives*, *Commissives*, *Expositives* and *Behabitives*.

Verdictives are performative verbs which depict acts done or carried out after some evidence and are described by such verbs as: acquit, hold, describe, estimate, rank and assess. Exercitives are performative verbs which can be attributed to the giving of decisions in favour or against someone or something and include such verbs as: order, command, direct and plead. Expositives are words having to do with the expounding of views, conducting arguments or clarifying messages. Verbs like affirm, deny, emphasize and report would be in this category. Behabitives are verbs which depict reaction to other people's behaviour and attitude e.g. apologize, thank, deplore, welcome, applaud, criticize and curse. Searle (1976) suggests that Austin's taxonomy is riddled with problems of ambiguity and overlap and of ignoring other acts which could not be directly interpreted. He states that in Austin's taxonomy

there is a persistent confusion between verbs and acts, not all the verbs are illocutionary verbs, there is too much overlap of the categories, too much heterogeneity within categories, many of the verbs listed in the categories do not satisfy the definition given for the

category and most important there is no consistent principle of classification (pp.9-10)

In an attempt to offer an alternative taxonomy, he does not, as will be seen, seem to make the taxonomy any easier. What Searle (1969) seemed to have added to Austin's (1962) classification was the concept of the propositional act which is the act of referring to someone as well as the concept of predicating something of someone. In the following example from Coulthard (1977:22), the speaker is expressing the proposition that John will leave the room and he is predicating the action of John that he will leave the room.

Will John leave the room?  
 John will leave the room.  
 John, leave the room.  
 If John will leave the room, I will leave also.

A close study of Searle's taxonomy does, nevertheless reveal that he does not in any way help much to resolve the controversy surrounding the identification and use of speech acts.

#### **4.2.1.2 Searle's taxonomy of speech acts**

Searle's taxonomy includes *representatives*, *expressives*, *verdictives*, *directives*, *permissives* and *declaratives*. The *representatives* are illocutionary acts that denote feelings and attitudes and include such acts as deploring, welcoming and condoling. *Directives* are illocutionary acts intended to get the addressee to carry out an act demanded by a command, a request, insistence or suggestion while *verdictives* are acts that evaluate or rank something. *Commissives* are illocutionary acts that commit the speaker to do something which usually involve a pledge such as promising, threatening or vowing. *Declaratives* are illocutionary acts that bring about the state of something through an external agent such as marrying, arresting or naming. Illocutionary acts have aroused controversy among linguists and particularly discourse analysts who have doubts as to whether speech acts should be subjected to linguistic analysis because of their dependence on the appropriateness of conditions or situations in which they occur, and the relationship between the speaker or writer and the listener or reader.

The socio-cultural context in which speech acts take place will determine the communicative potential of speech acts. However, knowing the socio-cultural context in which a speech act takes place may not be sufficient by itself to make



one infer meaning from a speech act unless that is accompanied by the speaker's or writer's corresponding knowledge of the status and role of the addressee or reader. I nevertheless tend to see the addressor-addressee role stated by speech act theorists as rather presumptuous since it not only expects the addressee to show some willingness or obligation but it appears that this obligation is carried out by a passive non-interactive partner who only has to gauge the intentions and rights of the addressor. Labov and Fanshel (1977) for instance, point out this as the Rule of Requests:

If A addresses to B an imperative specifying an action X at a time T1, and B believes that A believes that

- 1a) X should be done (for a purpose Y) [*need for the action*] (b). B would not do X in the absence of the request [*need for the request*]
2. B has the *ability* to do x (with an instrument Z)
3. B has the *obligation* to do X or is willing to do it.
4. A has the *right* to tell B to do X

then A is heard as making a valid requests for action (p.78)

Knowledge of whether a request is valid or not and the attendant linguistic expressions that go with the request are essential if the writer or speaker wishes to express his request. However, it would be wrong to assume that an awareness of this fact is as universal as an awareness of linguistic forms since, operating in a foreign culture, B might find that he fulfills some of the provisos or only one of them or none at all.

Interpreting a speech act may not be all that easy for a foreign language learner. Consider the following sentences:

Come home.  
Will you please come home.  
Isn't it about time for you to come home?  
It's getting late.  
(Labov and Fanshel 1977:77)

If in expressing the above request for action, a native speaker of English is conscious of the fact that he could express it differently as an imperative, as a request, as a suggestion or as a hint, while a non-native speaker is unaware of this fact, this would raise a question about the criteria for judging communicative competence, and lead us to think that there should after all be

several kinds of communicative competence universally.. McTear and Conti-Ramsden (1992) for instance point out that language impaired children may not be able to interpret the intention expressed by a speech act and may not be aware of the appropriate use of the speech act in such a sentence as "Can you open the window?" failing to understand whether it is a question designed to ascertain ability to open the window or as a request intended to make someone open the window.

A number of criticisms have been levelled against speech act theory (Coulthard 1977; Sinclair and Coulthard 1975; Stubbs 1983; Schiffrin 1991; McTear and Conti-Ramsden 1992). These criticisms can be said to centre on three dimensions: the identification of speech acts, the quantification of speech acts and the choice of 'appropriate' speech acts. As regards the identification of speech acts two problems arise. One is as regards how we can reliably identify which speech act is being performed from a particular utterance and the other is as regards how many speech acts an utterance has (Stubbs 1983; Brown and Yule 1983; McTear and Conti-Ramsden 1992). An utterance may perform several simultaneous acts depending on what the speaker's intentions are and the time he has to make the utterances. One utterance may show the speaker acknowledging and within the same utterance he could be requesting clarification of what his interlocutor said, making it difficult as Brown and Yule (1983:233) states, to determine "how a particular set of linguistic elements, uttered in a particular conversational context, comes to receive a particular interpreted meaning". The distinction between a locutionary act and an illocutionary one seems to be blurred when it is considered that when one is expressing a locutionary act he is also performing an illocutionary act. When I say I assure you that he will do it, you do not have to understand the illocutionary force of the statement first and then consider the locutionary act or vice versa, perception and interpretation are likely to be simultaneous. On the other hand to be able to know whether a particular speech act represents politeness, discreetness or disguised warning would require an understanding of the culture of the community in which the utterance is made and not only knowledge of the linguistic forms of the utterance. This is a point that is worth considering when any attempt is made to consider the quantity of speech acts as the basis of the child's fluency or communicative competence.

The ability of a pupil to engage in a variety of speech acts could be one of the determinants of the child's ability to engage in a conversation. The child who begins an utterance by explaining something and then clarifying it and offering

examples regarding his statement can be regarded as able to sustain a conversation. To be able to exploit a great variety of speech acts will depend on a number of factors some of which may have nothing to do with the child's linguistic competence. The ability of a child to engage in speech acts could depend on his interlocutor's ability, willingness as well as temperament to engage in a dialogue. However, the interlocutor's ability and willingness can only be translated into reality if the interlocutor knows the language in which to express himself. The success of speech acts in bringing about appropriate responses among interlocutors thus depends on interpersonal communication among interlocutors (McTear and Conti-Ramsden 1992). Appropriacy is a relative term since it depends on who needs to find the response appropriate. A speech act considered appropriate by a speaker or writer could be considered inappropriate by the listener or reader. Complete convergence of interests between interlocutors may not be easy to achieve and as long as this is the case, it may not be easy to attain what would be regarded as perfect appropriacy for a speech act. If we consider the performative verbs *plead* and *command*, they are both directives and the use of one rather than the other by the speaker would depend on the social status and the power relationship between one who has the power to command and , at the other end of the scale, the unempowered interlocutor who has to plead. Similarly, performative verbs such as *concluding* and *replying* both belong to Searle's *Representative* category but each could be described differently depending on the discourse that preceded or followed it. The statements uttered for which these might be used would probably call for different speech acts depending on how those statements are uttered. Appropriacy thus always entails a negotiation of meaning among interlocutors however different in power status they may be. The context of situation in which an utterance is made as well as the social status of the interlocutors will very much determine whether or not social convergence and subsequently a negotiation of meaning is attained. As McTear and Conti-Ramsden (1992:51) put it:

successful communication is a cooperatively and interactionally achieved accomplishment involving complex interpretive skills and the utilization of a wide range of background knowledge. What this means is that it is not possible to observe an interaction and make judgments of appropriacy. Rather, what is appropriate is what the participants themselves accept as appropriate in the interaction.

The need to look into the role of interaction before assessing the efficacy of a speech act is what has caused speech act theory to be criticized for not accounting for the social and interactional effects of an utterance and for merely

looking at the frequency of speech acts (Stubbs 1983; Schiffrin 1991). The number of speech acts may not tell us how competent the speaker or the writer is, since he might either have little to say due to his shyness or idiosyncratic nature or he may simply be avoiding engaging in a discussion about which he knows very little. His failure to participate in one situation may not necessarily mean that he cannot participate in another. The nature of the social environment and the task could also affect the interlocutor's communicative competence. Stubbs (1983:152-153) aptly sums up the inadequacy of quantifying speech acts in a communicative situation thus:

Speech act philosophy sees language as a set of activities in concrete situations. Language cannot be reduced to some logical structure which has a priority. ...natural language cannot be reduced to the notation of formal logic. Activities cannot be reduced to the formal devices of an ideal language.

The way speech acts are related to language acquisition cannot be determined solely by the nature of the utterance but could be determined by other factors as well. However, it must be admitted that both Austin (1962) and Searle (1976) have set a path we have to traverse in establishing a relationship between the utterances we make or the sentences we write and the linguistic forms associated with them. An understanding of this relationship could help us to set contexts in which pupils are able to exploit language to express their intentions. However, merely understanding the intentions expressed in speech acts without showing how interlocutors adjust their knowledge and feelings to their interlocutors in order to communicate effectively, may not show clearly how the intentions are realized. We can gain an insight into how this is achieved by having recourse to Grice's maxim of the Cooperative Principle.

#### **4.2.2 Grice's maxims of the Cooperative Principle**

From what I have attempted to highlight about speech acts, one may assume that expressing an intention and having that intention realized in speech acts and language forms could be sufficient to engender communication without the interlocutors taking pains to try to make out what it is that the other interlocutor is trying to communicate. This is however, not the case as a lot is involved before communication can be said to have taken place.

In communicating, human beings not only observe the way they say something but also ensure that what they say or write is relevant and appropriate to whoever listens to them or reads what they have written . The relevance and

appropriacy of what a speaker says or a writer writes down, is determined not only by the speaker's or writer's observance of linguistic rules so that what is said is said accurately, but also by extra-linguistic factors such as the socio-cultural and ideological beliefs of the speakers or writers as well as their personal idiosyncrasies. The philosopher Grice (1975:45-46) advanced the dictum called the Cooperative Principle whose maxims are stated as follows: **Quantity** (make your contribution as informative as required (for the current purposes of the exchange; do not make your contribution more than is required); **Quality** (try to make your contribution one that is true; do not say what you believe to be false; do not say for that for which you lack adequate evidence); **Relation** (be relevant); **Manner** (be perspicuous; avoid obscurity of expression; avoid ambiguity; be brief - avoid unnecessary prolixity; be orderly). What is expected of the maxims is that each of the interlocutors will conform to the maxims. To avoid violating the maxims requires that interlocutors know how to express themselves and know of each other's intentions and beliefs. An appropriate response will, therefore, be regarded as adhering to one or all the maxims, though adhering to all the maxims may not be all that easy and even the degree of appropriacy in adhering to a maxim will differ from individual to individual and with one individual. While talking I may adhere strictly to the Relation maxim but there may be little of the Quality maxim in what I say.

In the following example adapted from Grice (1975:51), B's response to A appears to violate the maxim of Relation.

A. Smitty doesn't seem to have a girl friend these days.

B. He's driving to New York every weekend.

The violation of the maxim by B gives rise to what has been termed an *implicature*. If A assumes that B is observing the Cooperative Principle, the assumption would be that B's is truthful, relevant, complete and clear and further that B may be intending A to infer (i.e. B may implicate) that B believes that Smitty has a girlfriend in New York or that he is too busy in New York to find a girlfriend and this makes B still maintain or observe the Quality maxim of trying to make a contribution that is true and that of Relation, without necessarily violating the Quality maxim of not saying what one believes to be false. However, there are occasions when the maxims can be violated simply because one of the interlocutors is uncooperative for personal reasons, or because of the need to maintain tact or to remain aloof as in the example: A.

Where are you going now? B. Somewhere. B violates the first maxim of Quantity ("make your contribution as informative as required") since his reply is incomplete. It is apparent that B is busy or in a bad mood and does not want to be disturbed. However, in replying thus he is not being clear and communicative enough.

Maxims are often violated in some genres of writing as in advertising where one may need to look closely at the picture appearing in the advertisement to get the message clearly. Scholarly writing, legal writing and scientific writing tend also to violate the Manner maxim by being obscure. This obscurity is deliberately maintained because of the scholastic or professional need to use the language of the profession, apparently for fear of having it misinterpreted. An understanding of both the intentions and functions performed by speech acts and the Cooperative Principle through which the intentions and functions get negotiated by both the speaker (or writer) and the listener (or reader), can contribute to our understanding of and improvement of writing in schools. However, before delving into the place of speech acts in classroom discourse, there is a need to have an insight into what language acquisition theories may have to offer about the role of speech acts in naturalistic environments, since an understanding of child language helps us to understand how the child is able to make use of it to learn classroom language.

#### **4.2.3 Speech acts and language acquisition**

The role of input (language addressed to the child or the learner) in second language acquisition has been a matter of considerable interest among psychologists, linguists and educators and has consequently led to much research. Knowledge of how a child acquires a language and puts it to use for achieving his needs during the early stages of growth is instrumental in understanding how later in his life, the child will use language to carry out communicative functions while speaking and while writing.

Studies in first language acquisition and child development show that the acquisition of language by the child is mainly geared to achieving his intentions (Halliday 1975; Hatch 1978;1983; Bruner 1975; Ninio and Bruner 1978; Nelson and Benedict 1978). Prior to having a language the child uses non-linguistic means to achieve his ends. The child will, during its infancy, point to objects or show objects by gestures or gaze to tell the mother of the need to have them. Later as he begins to babble words, he may utter a name which acts as a stimulus for fulfilling some attention getting function (Ninio and Bruner 1978).

The name is then linked to the referent the child has in mind. In responding to the child, the mother is equipped with a number of cues which might be physical or vocal. She might use facial expressions or gestures or even use a rising intonation. However, the mother cannot continue to let the child use hands or babble to express his intentions. The child might also intuitively think that for his needs to be fulfilled a one-word utterance (a holophrase) could prove to be more efficacious. As the mother resorts to multi-word utterances, the child is now prepared to begin building his syntax and eventually develop a language. Ninio and Bruner (1978) video-taped picture book-reading sessions among mother-child dyads noting verbal interactions of mothers and how they pointed at pictures. For the child, a record was made of all vocalizations and the features of vocalization such as excitement, vocalizing for some demand, fretting, gesturing, smiling and gazing. The child's vocal or gestural act was responded to by the mother who labelled the pictures. As the activity progressed, vocalization was substituted for non-vocal sign and later, a well-formed word using appropriate turns in labelling was used. The child's uttering of labelling responses was found to be isomorphic with the high incidence of invitation through the mother's interpretation of the child's communicative intent.

The relationship between discourse features and language is thus grounded in the intentions of the interlocutors and how they are able to interpret those intentions to the benefit of maintaining communication. It is apparent, therefore, that as the intentions of the child broaden following his growing up, both the child and the mother correspondingly broaden their range of speech acts. The mother will question the child or seek clarification for an incoherent statement the child makes or ask the child further questions and as the interactions go on, more speech acts are likely to be generated. Since the child's selection of the first words he uses precedes his knowledge of syntax and is primarily based on his intentions, it seems right to envisage that the meanings of words will be inseparable from their contexts but they will precede the child's syntactical development. Kaiser and Warren (1988) posit four factors which they assert, determine the productive form of speech acts. The four are: the speaker's intentions, the interactional context, semantic knowledge and syntactical knowledge (see Figure 4.1 below). Basing their explanation on the concept of a vector - a mathematical unit that depicts a quantity that has magnitude and direction, Kaiser and Warren (1988) conceive of a strong *intention* vector and a weak but developing *context* vector. The latter is regarded as weak because it only concerns how the child is able to discriminate or identify what is around him, and his interests, and involves adopting strategies such as eye contact,

gazing or turn taking to communicate with him. The process is, according to Kaiser and Warren (1988), governed by the child's attention to socio - cultural stimuli. The context vector is thus mainly interactional.

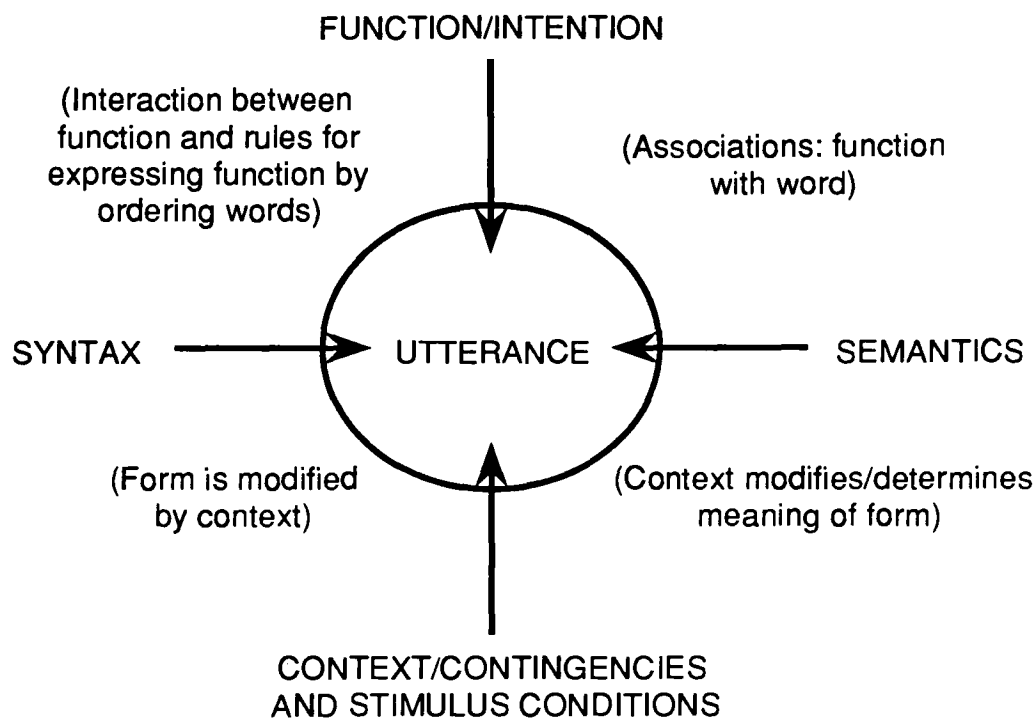


Fig. 4.1 A changing vector analysis model of language learning  
(Kaiser and Warren 1988: 420)

It is not easy to concur with the views of Kaiser and Warren (1988) on the context vector as being weak since, if a child is not able to exploit the benefits conferred by interaction (the context vector), he may not be able to realize the intention vector and communication is likely to break down. Kaiser and Warren (1988) assert that the ability of the child to discriminate particular aspects of the context, will function to determine conveyance of intentions or to regulate the behaviour of others by either resorting to non-linguistic means such as pointing or gesturing, babbling or uttering a one-word or two-word utterance. Social contexts form the basis for the future creation of grammatical forms for constructing the child's reality (Dore 1979:361) and the identity between context and syntax which at the early stages were quite separate developments appears blurred as they appear to be interdependent when the child grows. As Kaiser and Warren (1988: 422) state:

When the child begins to combine two words, or perhaps just prior to productive use of two-word utterances, syntactic knowledge (working



with the rules for ordering words) begins to shape the shape of communication acts.

In Chapter Two it was pointed out how Chomsky (1965) sees language essentially in terms of rules of grammar which are said to be innately structured in the child. It was also pointed out that Chomsky (1965) seems to regard meaning and language function as being separable from the grammar of the language, thus intimating that the meanings or functions of language need to be organized separately from the grammar, which he suggested was located in the LAD (Language Acquisition Device). Furthermore, he posited that the child's language was 'degenerate' and could not merit analysis, a matter which has been discounted by others like Bruner (1975) and Hymes (1972) who see Chomsky as ignoring the social dimension of language learning. Chomsky's argument seems to rule out any relationship between the grammar of the language and the functions of language by ascribing primacy to grammar and thus tends to ignore the role the mother's conversation, for example, could have on the child's future language development. I am now going to devote part of this chapter to a review of studies done to ascertain the relationship between input and the acquisition of language. I will focus mainly on 'naturalistic' rather than classroom language since the latter will be dealt with in another section.

#### **4.2.3.1 The role of speech acts in language acquisition: a review of studies**

In Chapter Two, I mentioned the findings of the Bristol Language Project, particularly with regard to the effect of the mother's or the caretaker's interactional patterns on the language of the child (Wells 1978; 1985; Barnes, Gutfreund, Satterly and Wells 1983). Among other things, the study looked into the patterns of interaction on the basis of the language functions (speech acts) of mother-child dyads. Among their findings was that the frequency with which parents addressed utterances to their children in polar interrogatives (interrogatives with auxiliary in initial position) was associated with the rate at which children learned the auxiliary verb system. The study also revealed that the frequency of some discourse strategies was found to be related to change in the child's speech. An increase in the semantic range in children's speech correlated significantly with the frequency of statements, explanations and corrections. At the same time the frequency of expansions and extensions was inversely related to the children's mean length of utterances (obtained by dividing the number of utterances by the number of turns). Acknowledgments, imitations and repetitions seemed to have had a supportive role in language

but were not as crucial as statements, explanations and corrections. Acknowledgments, imitations and repetitions helped to provide children with the essential feedback which they required to verify how communicative their utterances were.

Furrow, Nelson and Benedict (1979) studied the effects of motherese on child language acquisition and tried to ascertain the correlation between the mother's utterances and children's language on the basis of semantic and syntactic categories. A significant correlation was obtained between the mother's utterances and the mean length units of sentences. A correlation was also found between the mother's use of yes-no questions and the use of auxiliary verbs by children and children were found to be using more nouns than pronouns after interacting with their mothers. The results on the use of modality (auxiliary verbs) was, however, different as there was no relation between the mothers' utterances and the children's use of modal verbs, suggesting that the children may not have needed those auxiliary verbs during their interactions with their mothers. Relatively simple syntactical and semantic units were found to be relatively strongly related to rapid language growth while the use of more complex units was associated with slower language development, suggesting that the children were able to communicate effectively in simple language.

Most of the studies on language acquisition have tended to centre on the children's acquisition of morphemes as a result of interactions with their mothers or caretakers. Among these studies are those of Hoff-Ginsberg (1985) and Farrar (1990) who sought to determine properties of discourse generated by the mother which were responsible for facilitating the use of grammatical morphemes in the child's language. The speech acts observed in the mother's language were: recasts, expansions, topic continuation and topic change. Recasts are utterances that reformulate the child's preceding utterance by adding a grammatical morpheme to a noun or verb phrase of the previous utterance e.g. when a child says: 'Phone ring' and the mother replies: 'The phone is ringing,' the phrase is recast by the addition of the article and the auxiliary verb. It is expected that when the child notices a discrepancy in his statement, he will also say: 'The phone is ringing' and thus acquire proper use of the auxiliary verb. Recast could also involve substituting one morpheme for another e.g. 'I can move.' 'You will move'. Expansion involves adding words to the child's previous utterance but does not involve modification of the child's previous noun or verb phrase e.g. 'The ball'. 'The ball is rolling' The auxiliary and the participle are added but the subject noun phrase is not recast while topic continuation involves maintaining

the semantic theme of the child's utterance. A topic change would involve change of topic of the preceding utterance, and initiation of new topic which might include new grammatical morphemes.

The results of the study showed a significant correlation between the mother's self repetitions and children's growth in verb usage. The frequency of wh-questions in mothers' speech was significantly related to the children's growth in auxiliary verbs and the frequency of mothers' partial repetitions, and expansions of children's utterances was related to the children's growth in noun phrase complexity. The speech acts used (by order of frequency) were: topic continuation, expansion, recast and topic change. Expansion correlated with plural morpheme formation but did not correlate with the present progressive nor with the articles. Recasts were, however, associated with the plural, the progressive, the fronted auxiliary and the past tense thus revealing that discourse functions of expansion, topic continuation and recasts were closely associated with children's use of morphemes modelled on the mothers' speech.

Sorsby and Martlew (1991) also conducted a study to determine the association between linguistic input and the development of language with a view to ascertaining the concept of representation (i.e. how children can match, select, integrate, put items in order and reason) as propounded by Piaget (1959). They administered two tasks: a play-modelling task and a reading task which was communicative in nature. Mothers and children's utterances were transcribed and so were their non-verbal behaviour. The speech acts coded were: assertions, requests and directives. The results of the study showed that mothers made significantly more conversational utterances in play-modelling than in reading. A significantly greater percentage of utterances made representational demands in play-modelling compared to reading. The speech acts differed on the basis of variation in task. In modelling there was a considerable frequency of assertions, requests and directives. In reading, directives occurred less frequently than assertions and less still than requests for information. There were more acknowledgements in reading and there were more interactional patterns related to the management of learning than there were for instructional purpose. The results show that in book reading children are more able to deal with abstract language than in modelling because during play-modelling, pupils may be too preoccupied with manipulating what they model to engage in abstract thinking. They also show that the generation of speech acts and the language that is generated may be determined by the nature of the activities.

It is unfortunate that almost all studies on the relationship between parent's or caretaker's input and the child's language have involved native speakers of the language being studied. It may, therefore, not be easy to ascertain what impact input in the foreign language used by the teacher may have on non-native speakers who listen to the non-native speaker teacher. Most of these studies have also involved focus on input in the form of morphemes (plural morphemes, third person -s morpheme, and the -ing verb form). The studies have, therefore, basically limited themselves to single sentences rather than long pieces of discourse or continuous prose out of which we are able to make meanings. We are in a much better position to know what the learner can do with the input acquired from its mother or caretaker when we let the child employ the input in a communicative situation rather than in discrete sentences which may have no semantic relationship. The lack of tangible studies on the role of input in the acquisition of L2 syntax or vocabulary of a FL/ESL learner, makes it difficult to state whether or not, the results of the above studies could be replicated in situations where the non-native speaker is receiving input from a native speaker or a non-native speaker. Until such time that we have such studies, we can only base our conclusions on the results obtained from native speakers interacting with native speakers, and hope that the EFL/ESL speakers receiving input in a foreign or second language would be able to benefit in the same way when interacting with native speakers or non-native speakers.

#### **4.2.3.2. Speech acts and language**

The functions for which language is used would seem then to determine the structures of language which are acquired (Dore 1979). Hence, utterances that are made have to be weighed in relation to the language generated although, as has been pointed out, the relationship may not be so apparent in view of other factors that may have nothing to do with language. Inability to correct an error while speaking for instance, may be due to a child's linguistic ability but it could also be due to the child's inability to monitor the interlocutor's speech. It might, therefore, be an oversimplification to assume that because the child frequently asks questions, he will acquire accurate usage of auxiliary verbs. In general however, a relationship between the communicative functions of language and language structures is widely acknowledged. Speakers may, for example, use intonation to signal the importance of something or to confirm its veracity. Writers could also do this by changing the word order and having an adverbial particle or adjunct in front of a sentence as in: Up the hill he went, instead of the neutral He went up the hill. The change in word order may not only indicate a

difference of emphasis but could also signal a shift in the discourse context. In oral discourse, there is a tendency to overuse linking elements such as: oh, well, also, to either introduce new information or to show a link with the interlocutor's turn. The words could thus be said to be cohesion markers since they relate one utterance to another in the same way that a causal conjunction like therefore, because or so, does in both oral and written discourse.

Sato (1988) reports a study in which because the speakers relied on collaborating in expressing propositions, they hardly used any relative clauses - which they found unnecessary - but they still had complex structures. Ehrich and Koster (1983) in a study they conducted to find out how students used information in describing a room and how this bore on the variation of lexical and syntactic choice, found that subjects varied their syntax and lexis depending on what they were describing. When they were referring to parts of the room they preferred using the definite article to using demonstrative adjectives or adverbs, while most of them preferred using demonstrative adjectives and demonstrative adverbs to using definite articles when describing individual pieces of furniture. The shift in the attention, and apparently the shift in the use of speech acts too, in describing the room or objects in it, brought about a change in the syntactic forms. Even the word order of the subjects' utterances was determined by the new information they wanted to stress.

Understanding the language features encoded in a speech act requires ascertaining the link between the choice of the syntactic features and words and the way the discourse is organized. It is customary in conversations for interlocutors to refer anaphorically to their referents and to start sentences with demonstratives instead of articles as in the sentence: That policeman is going to stop the car rather than: The policeman is going to stop the car, when they assume that the audience knows what they are referring to. There is also a tendency for overusing the additive conjunctions: and, and then, and also etc... to initiate a topic, to continue the theme or to refer back to something as revealed in this transcript (See Appendix R, Transcript xxiii).

0005S2: it seems that man who was driving a bicycle

0006S1: yes

0007S2: it has got injury

0008S1: eh yes

0009S2: because he is very angry.

0010S1: eh and this accident is very bigger

- 0011S3: yes I think he is up hunting for a driver  
 0012S1: which one (with a rising intonation)  
 0013S2: that ro (.....) that boy  
 0014S1: oh that boy and you must remember that his bicycle is get- a crack on his bicycle  
                   so I think eh (laughs)  
 0015S3: you can see the ring  
 0016S1: yes the ring [it got]  
 0017aS3:               [it is already broken]  
 0018S1: yes already broken and so I think when /.../ it got a medicine after it got a  
                   medicine- he must a he [must]  
 0018aS2:               [repair]  
 0019S1: and repair it  
 0020S3: but myself want to ask a question about one picture the first picture  
 0021S1: which one?  
 0022S2: the picture about this box it belongs to whom? (with a rising intonation) that boy  
                   or the /dreva/ (with a rising intonation).  
 0023S1: oh this box is kept in the -on the pick up van [so]

This tendency is also discernible in the writing of elementary writers as in this composition in which the introductory sentence of one of the subjects of this study "Let me begin at the beginning", and the use of other expressions like: " I mean two men, Now let me explain", as well as the use of the demonstrative that and the conjunction and, show that the writer either imagines his classmates and the teacher who also happens to know what he is describing as his only audience, or is simply unaware of the proper written convention (Composition No. 35).

Let me begin at the beginning. On that picture I see two houses, one tree, the man I mean two men , and between the men and the house there is a woman who is cooking some food also I see the sun I think is the sun set time.

Now let me explain about that men that men I think is the fishermen and one man is carrying the fish and is the oldest than the other one. and that men is walking towards the woman who is cooking some food and the young man is front the old one.

The relationship between speech acts and language forms is particularly pertinent among language disabled children. These children may, for instance, be able to undertake turns in a conversation but they may not have the linguistic resources to express themselves. Pupils learning to make requests, may know how to initiate turns but they may fail to use appropriately, expressions such as:

Will you please..., Would you mind... The question is whether facilitating the development of language should take precedence over the development of the pupil's ability to communicate or whether it is the latter which should precede. A balance is thus needed between developing interaction and developing the target language. Children may bring with them a knowledge of the language which enables them to understand their peers. However, their syntactic or lexical knowledge may not be enough if they do not know how to monitor their peers' talk. If they do not know whether or not their friends' utterances have ended, it may not be easy for them to provide the appropriate responses however good their English may be. This is particularly so in a situation where the learners have to exchange information. Understanding a message becomes even more important where clarification of the given information may be needed and hence apart from understanding the target language he is learning, the learner may need to understand the mechanics of turn taking.

#### **4.2.3.2.1. Turn taking, speech acts and language learning**

In any culture, there are naturally occurring norms governing the way conversation is held. These norms will involve when one is to initiate a conversation, when he is allowed to intervene or interrupt another interlocutor and even when he is to maintain silence. The observance of these norms in a culture has great ramifications not only for getting oneself understood and maintaining the flow of the conversation but also for signalling the language features that are pertinent in keeping the conversation going. It is an accepted fact that in many cultures, it is usually one person who speaks at a time and that only one turn will be allocated at a time. How conversationalists are able to take the floor and maintain a smooth conversation has been studied by ethnomethodologists, notably Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) who offer these rules of turn taking;

1. If the current speaker S selects, the next speaker (N) in the current turn, S is expected to stop speaking, and N is expected to speak next.
2. If S's utterance or behaviour does not select the next speaker, then any other participant may self-select. Whoever selects first gets the floor.
3. If no speaker self-selects, S may continue.

An understanding of when to take the floor is thus likely to affect the way the talk is organized. However, understanding how turns are managed in a

conversation may not be sufficient by itself. An understanding of the interlocutor's position of power or status could be equally important. In some societies for instance, one may not speak unless he is spoken to by an elder and may not reply lengthily unless told to do so. In some cultures the reply could be given by a non-verbal sign. Turn-taking is thus characterized by power relations and could determine the patterns of interaction in the conversation as well as the language of a particular speech event.

The place of speech acts in turn-taking can be seen within the context of intentions specified in the speech acts. Before undertaking to respond, an interlocutor has to understand the intentions of the speaker. This will determine how he is going to reply. If he knows the intention of the speaker and thinks that the speaker has exhausted his points, he could take the floor and thus avoid derailing the interlocutor's talk by interruptions. Knowing the intention of the speaker could entail providing the right responses for example:

A: Oh, you did it very well.

B: Thank you.

B's response is appropriate in this context because he seems to understand A's motive and the function his utterances - congratulating. Pairs of utterances in a conversation which are thus mutually dependent have been called by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) *adjacency pairs*. Thus in English the expected response to a greeting is a greeting, the expected response to congratulations is thanks and the expected response to the giving of information is an acknowledgement. The mutual dependence of adjacency pairs is underscored by the fact that we can be sure of the function of an utterance if the response to it provides us with a known context. The word "hello" responded to variously could signal either the response yes implying that one's attention is being drawn to something or it could be a greeting or a request by a telephone caller to identify himself. The effectiveness of an adjacency pair can be said to be dictated by the social context in which the exchange between the interlocutors takes place but also by the interlocutors' linguistic competence. Non-native speakers for instance, may not be able to respond to a native speaker, not because they don't understand but because they are not familiar with the expressions used by the native speakers (e.g a response to a Happy New Year greeting). Obtaining a turn is thus one thing and making use of the potential provided by the turn is another for, as Van Lier (1988:105) puts it:



Competent turn taking is a complex skill. It involves monitoring the ongoing construction of a conversation while at the same time assessing one's opportunities to take the floor and, if possible, actively planning what to do once the floor is obtained. It includes using culturally appropriate ways to compete successfully with other would be speakers, interpreting their intentions through their actions, a fine sense of rhythm and timing and, once speakership is obtained, the ability to say what one wants to say effectively.

It might, therefore, be necessary to examine features of language which to a certain extent, show how successful turn taking has been managed. The relationship between turn taking and the making of propositions may not be easy to discern since one could formulate a topic and formulate his propositions without paying heed to how turns are allocated. On the other hand, there is no assurance that once observance of turn taking rules has been attained, language features will automatically emerge. Observance of rules could be made by an interlocutor who nonetheless, is unwilling or too shy to participate in the conversation. However, since turn taking takes place in a communicative situation, one would hope that some syntactic and lexical features could be attributed to the way speakers are able to organize their turns. The ability to organize turns will have a profound effect on how the interlocutors are able to develop a topic of conversation depending, apparently, on how they are able to utilize their language and their knowledge to sustain those turns. I will now devote the next section to looking into the impact of turn-taking on the syntactic and lexical features of discourse. A review will be made of studies done on the relationship between turn taking and language development and later I will examine the implications of speech acts and turn taking for writing.

#### **4.2.3.2.1.1 Turn taking and speech acts: a review of studies**

There are few studies which might help to cast some light on the significance of the manner in which turns are maintained to elicit language. One such study is that of Tong-Fredericks (1984) who wanted to measure the fluency of the oral language of his subjects while they were engaged on one of, a problem solving task, an authentic task and a role play task. He also ascertained the frequency of turns to see if different activities were related to the different language features. The problem solving activity showed the most overlapping and interruptions and had the most turns of all other activities. The problem-solving tasks were also associated with a higher incidence of repetitions. Among the speech acts involved in problem solving were: defining, checking understanding, rephrasing and evaluating. Although the study did not establish

the different language features generated among the tasks, the discourse features generated were enough to show the link between the discourse elicited in oral communication and the subjects' communicative competence. Bygate (1988) conducted a study to assess the typical features of language learners use when engaged on various tasks. In the 'Find the Difference' (Descriptive task) for instance, he found that his subjects engaged in questions, answers, descriptions, and recapitulations of what they had described. He also found that they engaged in long turns, though this had the impact of making them engage in fewer negotiations apparently, because of the cognitive demand that long turns entail.

In engaging in long turns, interlocutors tended to talk lengthily about something they had thought about and if this was repeated by other interlocutors, only a few ideas were likely to be exchanged. The study also revealed a high incidence of existential expressions (There is/There are...). The types of turns and length of those turns and the use of verb phrases as opposed to clausal units of language varied according to certain features of interaction. Where groups checked on specific details, recapitulated, revised or summarized, there was a tendency towards shorter turns, more repetitive transforms, more completions and an increase in the proportions and use of phrasal units. The performance of these tasks was thus isomorphic with the patterns of turns and the language generated.

The difference in conversational style is likely to bring about a difference in the syntactic and lexical structures as is almost self-evident when one listens to native speakers and non-native speakers' utterances or to competent non-native speakers and incompetent non-native speakers. The ability or inability to maintain topics in conversation could determine the success or failure of an interlocutor to sustain the conversation and to learn the target language. The place of homes and schools in promoting this ability thus becomes crucial if a child is to succeed at school. In a study he carried out among working class children and middle class children, Hemphill (1989) found out that middle class children took longer turns than their working class counterparts. The former had fewer overlaps and fewer pauses and though they had the same proportion of backchannels (e.g. mmh, yeah) as the working class children, they were extended backchannels which repeated, completed or commented on the speaker's utterances, whereas working class children rarely attempted to take the floor after using a backchannel. As regards the language used, middle class children used elaborate syntax while working class children frequently omitted

sentence elements when mentioning the conversational topic. Working class children also used more pronominalizations normally used to refer to the previous speaker's turn whereas middle class children tended to pack information in either relative clauses or subordinate constructions.

What these few studies reveal, is that turns are both features of oral skill and linguistic skill (Bygate 1988). The ability to engage strategically in such speech acts as framing, repeating, questioning and elaborating, is a process that entails knowing when the interlocutor's turn begins and ends and the intention of the interlocutor as well as employing language to engage in appropriate responses. Turns also require socio-cultural skills as well as knowledge-domain skills because it means putting the speech acts to use in a socio-cultural environment one knows or ought to strive to know as well as knowing what one is talking about. Another skill required is the task domain one, since as evinced by the studies, learners have to prepare themselves to employ their oral, linguistic as well as their socio-cultural and knowledge domain skills to confront different tasks. Does the speaker need to engage in clarifying, repeating and elaborating in a narrative task in the same way as he would while describing a scene to a friend, and to what extent does he engage them in describing how a vacuum flask works? To what extent does he engage in such discourse features in oral discourse as opposed to written discourse and what type of written discourse is likely to make it easy or difficult for him to employ them? These are interesting questions that could help to unravel the extent to which discourse analysis could contribute to an understanding of the relationship between oral and written communication and the development of language skills. I will now attempt to show the relationship between speech acts and turn taking and the generation of linguistic features in both oral and written discourse and try to ascertain how a knowledge of speech acts and turn taking could help us understand what happens in oral texts and in written texts.

#### **4.2.3.2.1.2 Turn taking, speech acts and writing**

The implications of turn taking for writing have got to be seen within the framework of an understanding of the difference between spoken and written language spelt out in Chapter Three. Turn taking as managed in oral discourse cannot, for example, be expected to take place in writing because of the lack of physical proximity between the writer and the readers. The writer can structure turns in new sentences or paragraphs and he can end his turns in a full stop. If he wants to repeat his points he can use reiteration (cohesion) devices

(Halliday and Hasan 1976) to show the link between one sentence and another by repeating words, using synonyms as well as hyponyms and superordinate words, or he could use appositions to stress a point. While a speaker could use such prosodic features as intonation to stress his point, a writer could probably underline the words or place adverbials in front and change the word order (Subject-verb inversion). An understanding of the relationship between the management of turns in speaking and writing is called for before ascertaining how speech acts can be related to the functions of sentences, because just as speech acts are realized in turns, the language functions of clarifying, requests for clarification, questioning, explaining or elaborating, are realized in phrases or clauses of sentences the order and relationship of which has got to be understood before one can write a coherent paragraph.

Studies comparing turn taking and the role of speech acts in writing are as sparse as studies on the discourse features of the verbal interaction preceding writing. Jacobs and Karliner (1977) and Freedman and Katz (1987) appear to be the only ones who have tried to compare turn taking in conference writing (Student-teacher conference) with ordinary (informal) conversation. They regard the conversation which takes place in student-teacher conferences as lying in between informal conversation and formal classroom discourse and being therefore, suited to writing. Their assessment may not be directly relevant to this study because the conversation that takes place in the conference talk they are writing about and in many writing conferences, seems to take place after the pupils have done their writing and are making revisions, and so a discourse analysis of such conversation is unlikely to be the same as that in which pupils talk before they write.

I have, elsewhere in this chapter, pointed out how the use of articles, pronouns and demonstratives can be used to maintain cohesion between one sentence and the previous one as in the sentence: The College has launched a new policy. They want to recruit more staff, in which the pronoun they refers to The College in the first sentence. Conjunctions, especially the additive conjunctions, (Halliday and Hasan 1976) and, then, so, and the causal conjunctions so, because, are often used in spoken discourse to link individual utterances within turns but they are also often used at the beginning of utterances and can also be used to indicate a shift in topic. The appearance of these words in a turn could be a signal of elaboration or extension of a further point or merely an introduction of a new message as evidenced in this transcript (see Appendix R, Transcript xxv).

- 0183S5: there is a corner in front of (.....) there was a corner so at that corner - few  
boxes I mean three boxes
- 0184S6: when - when the car turned the corner
- 0185S3: three - three boxes got off the car
- 0186S5: OK
- 0187S3: unfortunately that man who was driving his bicycle eeh collided - with those  
[three]
- 0187aS6: [boxes]
- 0188S3: and indeed I think he was aah in high speed so it seemed that he fell - he fall  
down - he fell off the bicycle - after the crash and
- 0189S5: /..5../ me
- 0190S3: and the third picture it is shown that
- 0191S5: you have been have you already explained about this?
- 0192S3: yes the second one
- 0192aS5: [the second one]
- 0193S4: [explains] is shown is shown that the man behind the car collide with the  
three boxes
- 0194S5: OK
- 0195S3: and he - fell down so it was a bad accident in fact - maybe he got some  
problems due to the accident eeh that is eeh second picture
- 0196S5: yes

The use of the conjunction *so* in the first turn (0183) apparently, seems out of place as it could be used instead to elaborate or clarify a point but in this turn it seems to function in much the same way as the conjunction *and* in simply extending the point regarding the corner. In turns 0188, 0190 and 0195, the conjunction *and*, merely serves to continue the idea begun in the previous turn and only *so* in turn 0195 seems to provide a causal relationship. The use of ellipsis (omission of a lexical or clausal item) depends also on the interlocutor's understanding of a previous utterance as in:

A: Did you go alone?

B: Yes I did.

or in a longer sentence :

A: Do you think that they will win the ticket

B. Yes I do

It appears not easy for a non-native speaker to give elliptical replies in their correct forms and it would probably involve him learning them by heart as they

are expressions not often found in languages other than English. The learner is thus faced with both the problem of understanding what his interlocutor said in his previous turn and the problem of putting the word in the correct form.

In written discourse, the use of conjunctions in new sentences can often be used to create cohesion. The conjunctions may be placed within the sentence but they can also be placed, for stylistic purpose, at the front position, probably to draw the attention of the reader to an additional idea or contrast being shown, as evidenced in this extract:

The V&A Karaoke booth was borrowed for the current Vision of Japan exhibition and is being touted to attract new year revellers. "Sing in the new year in the karaoke booth at the V & A ", invited a statement issued by the museum yesterday. The Karaoke machine will be available for new year revellers", it continued. "And an automatic massage chair will await all those who have over- indulged during the Christmas period". The museum is so confident of attracting merry makers that it will open on New Year's Day for the first time. The booth, the latest in Japanese technology, has several thousand songs to choose from and is soundproof so noisy singers will not affect other exhibits. But yesterday critics dismissed the move as an extraordinary gimmick.

(from *The Guardian*, 17 December 1991, p.20)

On the other hand, ellipsis in written discourse may not be as frequent as in spoken discourse, but it still appears when listing items or when quoting a spoken piece of discourse. An understanding of the initial phrase is required before one can make out what the listed items refer to as in: Before the year ends he will have finished the course, taken a loan and built a house. Further examples of ellipsis are provided in this extract from Doris Lessing (1973:20) in which the two dashes indicate omission of words.

In the past, great discussions had gone on about the letting or the non- letting of the house, everyone having strong opinions about it. They had gone on for days, weeks. 'Now ' she said. 'Well, we've never let it before, have we\_\_?' 'What of it?' said Michael. 'Some visiting family will take it and be glad to\_\_ even if we do leave things in the cupboards'. 'But what are the children going to use as headquarters if they happen to be in London on their way to somewhere?' They can use somebody's else's house for once, and about time to\_\_.

Another linguistic phenomenon involving understanding what is expressed in the previous turn or sentence in an utterance or written text is the formation of lexical words which McCarthy (1988; 1991) calls relexicalization. This involves

content being repeated in a different form in a reformulated, or restructured form. It may involve changing or retaining the same form as in:

- A. People just don't work Saturday mornings officially in London.
- B. Does he come in on Saturdays? (McCarthy, 1988: 189)

In the above example, the words come in are given as equivalent of *work* whereas in the sentence: *He's a very nice man charming man*, (McCarthy 1988:191) there is a change of word for the sake of clarification, expansion or redefinition. In written forms we are likely to expect this clarification to be shown by the use of synonyms as well as other sentence constructions which the author might use to create an effect. How a writer presents a point right from the first element in expressing a proposition, will probably affect how coherently or incoherently he is going to present the message.

#### **4.2.3.2.2 Implications of Illocutionary acts and Grice's maxims for writing**

##### **4.2.3.2.2.1 Locutionary acts and illocutionary force in writing.**

In writing a sentence and afterwards a paragraph, a writer is expressing both a proposition (the people or objects as well as the actions he is writing about) and an illocutionary act (Widdowson 1978; Steinman 1982). The writer could of course, merely write a statement which does not convey anything meaningful to the reader (a locutionary act) and unless he has something to tell the readers, they may not appreciate what he writes and they may not take him seriously either. Thus it may be possible to shift from a locutionary act to an illocutionary one but it is not possible to shift from an illocutionary act to a locutionary one unless one is not seriously engaged in conveying a message. I would therefore, think that whereas a speaker could perform merely a locutionary act perhaps as a kind of vocal play, the serious writer is constrained by the need to be understood to perform both locutionary acts and illocutionary acts and the time and attention he has to give to writing (Ochs 1979) should at least ensure that he does so.

The writer's linguistic system may enable him to use cohesive devices such as conjunctions and pronouns to link propositions. However, this may not show that he is asserting, complaining, clarifying a point or justifying his claim. Just as in spoken discourse where a proposition expressed in one turn has to be clearly related to another, in written discourse, it is anticipated that the writer's

propositions in a sentence will be clearly linked to a previous one. Only by linking sentences using linguistic devices that make propositions cohere, can the writer be said to be creating a contextually appropriate sentence. While bringing about cohesion among sentences is a linguistically signalled endeavor (Widdowson 1978), we can appreciate the utility of this cohesion if the propositions so linked create logical meaning or coherence. As Widdowson (1978:32) states, propositional development and illocutionary acts are clearly interrelated.

Discourse is interpreted by our understanding how sentences are used for propositional and illocutionary development and how these two aspects of discourse interrelate and reinforce each other.

The point is underscored by Steinmann (1982:302) who states that

If the writer performs the illocutionary act of making a statement, for example, communication is complete as soon as readers recognize that he intends them to believe.

Communication of a message by a writer would therefore, take place if he has a premonition of his reader's belief that he is really making them understand what he says. The readers will believe that he is making a statement, though believing so does not mean that they will agree with him about the statement he has made. If we go back to Widdowson (1984) again we can say that there has to be "*congruence*" between the writer's discourse and the interpretation made by his readers. Both the writer and the reader are bound to readjust to certain aspects of knowledge. These aspects of knowledge are: knowledge of the world; knowledge of conventions of the language code and knowledge of use (Widdowson 1984). These mediate to make the writer engage in what Widdowson (1984) calls *focal acts* and *enabling acts*, the first being concerned with the conveying of ideas through the written text and the latter being concerned with making the conveyance of ideas possible.

Engaging in focal acts or conveying an idea, as has been pointed out, is done when the writer (as an addressee) puts forth his ideas using the knowledge at his disposal and the language he wishes to use to express himself. Enabling acts get deployed when, through illocutionary acts, the writer is able to clarify his points or justify them by giving evidence, or elaborating a point, reformulating it or exemplifying it. Employing enabling acts may be difficult for an inexperienced writer because what the writer clarifies may not be regarded by the reader as adequately clarified. The problem is whether the writer is making the clarification with an intended reader in mind or whether the



clarification is being made for an audience the author may not even be aware of. The writer, writing for a professional clientele such as doctors or lawyers, may need to remember that his publication is likely to be reacted to not only by people in the profession but other people in other professions. These could be psychologists and sociologists trying to project their psychological and sociological viewpoints. The extent to which the writer's expectations of the reader's knowledge of the world and the reader's knowledge of the language help the reader to decode what the writer writes is thus dependent on extra-linguistic factors.

While the writer may find it easy to tailor his knowledge to the audience's knowledge of the subject (world knowledge), it may not be easy to tailor the discourse to the reader's grammatical competence. Those who may know the subject may know it at different levels. Within the intended audience there are people with a knowledge of the specialized vocabulary of the subject matter but there are others who only have a general vocabulary. Even among readers with a general vocabulary, there are those who, by virtue of their education or reading habits, have a more extensive vocabulary than others. Even in ideal situations, no writer ever adjusts his discourse utterly to the knowledge and interests of his readers considering the linguistic and cognitive load he has to contend with while writing.

It was pointed out that mothers have to modify their speech to meet their children's needs and that expansions and clarifications of utterances depend on how skilfully both the mother and the child are able to exploit their exchanges. It was also pointed out that grammatical structures are related to the patterns of illocutionary acts that emerge in the course of mother-child discourse. Auxiliaries following the mother's *wh*- questions and elliptical answers (ellipsis) may depend on how the child responds to the mother as well as the ability of the child to internalize the language features. Responding to requests for clarification for instance, may involve more than just repeating what the interlocutor may have said in the previous turn. It could involve changing what was once a command into an interrogative or responding to a question by using elliptic devices so as not to appear to be repeating the statement. For a mother to use a speech act and expect the child to use it and gain the expected syntactical features in the course of doing so would require, therefore, the resources of the language to be modified for the child, the need to listen carefully to the child and the ability to vary speech in accordance with the features obtaining in mother-child discourse. The process of relating the

propositions that develop as the mother interacts with the child to language learning could be important to the child's future language development at home and at school. McTear and Conti-Ramsden (1992:122) posit some examples regarding the implications of the child's failure to communicate for the child's later development thus:

A failure to use determiners could be a result of the child not yet being aware of a need to distinguish between old and new information, while omission of sentence subjects may be due to the child's assumption that if the referent of the subject is mutually available to speaker and listener, then there is no need to specify it. Thus syntactic immaturity may give rise to pragmatic deficiencies, although equally the child's syntactic deficiencies may be attributable to pragmatic factors.

The implications of speech act theory for writing can be seen against the background of the need to teach students to clarify and elaborate what they are writing, to describe and explain vividly by relating sentences to one another. Apparently, this cannot be achieved by assigning exercises in which the pupil merely uses a cohesive device such as: and, so, because, therefore or however. Although the pupil may know how to use these words in simple sentences, he needs to use them in paragraphs so that he can see a much better link between one proposition and another than there is in two clauses. This can be done much better in a situation where exercises offer opportunities for the writer to explain the causes or effects in an event or use information from charts or pictures to link and order events or situations.

At the early stages of composition writing, it might be appropriate to provide pupils with models on which their compositions could be based. Providing models is in consonance with "scaffolding" that mothers provide for their children when they are learning to speak and could be useful to the pupils provided it goes along with some free writing which enables the child to think for himself. Modelling can also involve cue words like conjunctions and pronouns which the pupils could use as a guide for writing their compositions.

Failure by pupils to write may arise because they are unable to connect one proposition to another in sentences. This could be attributed to two reasons. On the one hand it may be because they do not understand the subject matter and so they fail to write coherently. On the other hand, it could be due to their little understanding of the meanings of the words they use e.g. the use of however rather than because. While the latter could be ameliorated by frequent exercises so that they internalize the words they use, the former could be rectified by

exposing pupils to as many genres as possible. A knowledge of how propositions are linked in various genres could help to reveal how relations are established between events. There is also a tendency among many incompetent writers to assume that what they write is known to their readers and that the readers do not need to know more. By thus adhering, unconsciously perhaps, to the maxim of Quantity - "do not make your contribution more informative than is required" - they violate another maxim - "make your contribution as informative as required". They will usually write a paragraph or two and end suddenly expecting the reader to make out what they mean. In other words, they fail to articulate their intentions. Their implicatures rely on the contextual knowledge which readers do not have (Cooper 1982). Gaining entry into the worlds of such writers by learning about what they know and effectively negotiating meaning with them will fill the gap between the writer's world and the readers' worlds.

#### **4.2.3.2.2 Grice's maxims and perlocutionary force in writing**

One effective way of negotiating ideas with readers is to try to get the attention of the readers right from the moment the writer begins to write his first sentence. Ideas started in the first sentence can be expanded and linked with other ideas to create a logical relationship. In advertisements for example, headlines may attract the attention of potential readers by being ambiguous or discreet. The beginning of a chapter in a book or an article in a journal, however, has to resort to linguistic devices which will make the readers attracted enough by the first paragraph to continue reading. A writer may be able to attract the attention of the readers by making the first sentence forceful either by directly asserting something or giving a brief historical account of what one is writing about as is common in many scholarly journals. The assertion or historical description does not need to be long to violate Grice's maxim of Quantity by stating more than should be stated. Scarcella (1984) reports on a study to see how writers gain the attention of readers in their introductory paragraphs. The study was conducted among native English speakers and non-native speakers (mostly Oriental speakers). It was found that the non-native speakers tended to use longer historical descriptions in their introductory paragraphs and they also were not adequately explicit in introducing their themes. They usually repeated, paraphrased or offered further explanations of what they had already stated. In contrast, the highly proficient writers, used fewer repetitions and paraphrases than the less proficient ones. The non-native speakers tended to use synonyms and lexical items instead.

Although writers may sometimes use apposition to embody an afterthought or some information that may have been left out - the apposition functioning in more or less the same way as the paraphrasing of a previous utterance in speech - the information encoded in an apposition has to be crucial to the readers or it has to be new otherwise they will think that the writer is not communicating anything of importance to them. An inexplicit statement could arise either because the writer underestimates his readers' knowledge of the subject matter and thus thinks that he has to repeat what he has already said or elaborate it. It could also be due the fact that the writer may think that because his readers know a lot about the subject, he has to write extensively on the subject to convince them that he also knows about it, thus unconsciously forgetting that he is violating the Quantity maxim as his readers already know about it.

Another way by which speech acts could be employed to direct the attention of the readers to a theme or subject, could be to use linguistic devices which the author believes will perform the function of asserting an idea. Jones and Jones (1985) give examples of cleft sentences (e.g. It is now an acknowledged fact that the multi-party system is to be reintroduced in Kenya) or a pseud-cleft sentence (e.g. What is now an acknowledged fact is that the multi-party system will be reintroduced in Kenya). The aim of this strategy seems to be stylistically or strategically to orient the reader to something which the author believes to be true but which the reader may need to judge for himself. A speech act that asserts not only expresses the writer's intention but could also reveal the effect or tone of a statement which is designed to capture the reader's attention and which is otherwise known to have *perlocutionary force*. While the illocutionary effect could as pointed out, be brought about by the writer's knowledge of the language and the knowledge of his audience, the achievement of a particular perlocutionary force might depend on other extralinguistic features notably, the writer's ability to drive a point home effectively as well as his ability to convince. I would argue that while expressing an illocutionary act is something we all have to do if someone is to infer what intention we wish to express, performing a perlocutionary act goes beyond our ability to employ language and involves understanding the reader's intention and his world knowledge. To express ourselves effectively appears to be a talent or a natural disposition though it certainly needs to be reinforced by language ability and wide reading.

Jones and Jones (1985) give some examples of how writers are able to utilize discourse features to create effect in writing. By using rhetorical questions the

writer is able to reveal a matter of concern to him and at the same time draw attention to a problem or introduce some query to which he soon provides an answer. By starting the following paragraph with questions, the writer (Lemke 1985:30) seems simply to be catching the readers' attention.

If the teaching of a specialized subject like science consists in large part of teaching residents to speak and interpret, write and read the language of science, then how can we usefully talk about a curriculum that sees language study as merely another subject? Any subject, whether science or social studies or the study of mathematics, music, art or literature, can surely be characterized as teaching certain specialized meaning making practices in the context of particular specialized activity types. Language is a resource system for making social meanings in all subjects.

In the first paragraph, the author poses a question which he later answers in the second sentence and the third, by stating that any subject is geared towards making meaning. He then concludes by stating that if the aim of a subject is to make meaning, that meaning can be conveyed through language. The effect of the first sentence seems to be attained not only by the use of a question but also by listing verbs in sequence so as to show the sequence of ideas in the phrases: *to speak and interpret, write and read the language*.

We see the same trend in newspaper articles and particularly in editorial comments where the use of questions seems to attract the attention of readers to a current contentious issue as in the following editorial comment.

MAASTRICHT OR MINSK? The binding together of one part of Europe with fragile strands of future union? Or the rupture of the once solid ties which held in place a far greater union on the Eurasian map? History will make its own judgement at the summit and the weekend meeting of the three Slav republics. But at the moment the confusion of Maastricht must be overshadowed by the drama - perhaps tragedy - of Minsk.

(from *The Guardian*, 10 December 1991, p.24)

The first three questions act as attention getters. The sentence that follows would in speech, be a follow up of the turns depicted by the three questions. One can note the capital letters used in the first question to attract attention as well as the short question forming the nominal group; one on European unity and the other apparently the disintegration of the Soviet Union; and the use of such lexical items as: *binding, fragile, strands, the rupture*. It is also interesting to note the use of the words: *summit* and *meeting*, ascribing differentiations of status of the two meetings and the use of the apposition *perhaps tragedy*, which

the author seems to regard as a better, certainly more impactful, phrase than the word *drama* to describe the Minsk meeting.

The implication of this for teaching is that teachers should not only teach grammar and vocabulary but should orientate their pupils to a variety of discourse features in writing. Since pupils come to school with their schemata of explaining, arguing or elaborating not well attuned to the demands of school writing, it is imperative that pupils be introduced from the earliest stages to some writing that will offer them the opportunity to explain, argue, elaborate and summarize even though this may have to begin at an elementary level. Attention could also be drawn to other subjects like Geography and History where points are presented and argued or expanded. Where non-native speakers of English are teachers who speak the same language as the pupils, an attempt could be made to draw the pupils' attention to examples of argument or elaboration and explicit writing from the writing available in the pupils' mother tongue or national language. Since school writing is inextricably bound up with the discourse of the classroom, it is worth considering generally the nature of classroom discourse with a view to ascertaining whether it is conducive to fostering the kind of writing in which pupils are able to express their intentions, elaborate and argue their differing points of view.

#### **4.3 The nature of classroom discourse**

The last twenty years have been marked by a considerable interest in the nature of teaching and learning in the classroom. We are now in a position to learn from sociologists, ethnographers and linguists about the constraints and potentials classroom discourse offers to the learner. Classroom discourse is different from mother-child talk or other forms of informal talk because it is a form of communication subject to rules governing the social context of the classroom which make it constrained (Barnes 1969; Stubbs 1983; Flanders 1970; Pallincsar 1986; Pallincsar and Brown 1984;1989) unlike child-mother talk or informal talk whose patterns could be flexibly determined by the intentions of the speaker during the time of speaking and the social context of the conversation. Classroom discourse is dominated by teacher talk (Flanders 1970) which is characterized by a far higher percentage of utterances than those of informal talk and by highly structured turn-taking following an almost regular pattern of Initiation-Response-Evaluation (Coulthard 1977; Sinclair and Coulthard 1977; Bellack et al 1966). It is also characterized by speech acts which underscore the teacher's role in the classroom such as: explaining,

defining, questioning, correcting, prompting, ordering and requesting (Stubbs 1976; 1983).

What is particularly important in understanding the nature of classroom discourse is the status and role of the teacher and students. Since the classroom is a social context and a social culture (Breen 1985b; Kramsch 1985), the teacher has at least as much influence upon the pupils as the pupils have influence on their fellow pupils. Breen (1985b) and Kramsch (1985) offer a comprehensive view of the social context of the classroom. Presenting a social matrix of the learning situation in the classroom, they argue that despite the differences in relative power, social distance and the degree of socio-cultural imposition exerted by the teacher, knowledge in the classroom is socially constructed. The teacher's power is clearly evinced by the teacher's control in the classroom. He is the one who decides what should be talked about, when it should be talked about and who should talk about it. In doing this, the teacher acts from a position of power and confidence which are conferred on him by virtue of his qualification as a teacher.

Maintaining closeness or social distance in the classroom can be illustrated by the relationship which teachers and pupils have and their roles. The learner's role in the classroom is delimited by the learner's understanding that he cannot take up such teacher's roles as explaining, requesting clarification or questioning unless he is working in a group with his fellow pupils. By virtue of his place in the teacher-student relationship continuum, the student realizes that what he can do most is to reply to the teacher's questions and to explain only if required to do so by the teacher. The closeness or distance might be evinced also by the extent to which the learners may engage in verbal interactions. The ability or inability of learners to participate in verbal interactions, for instance, may be due to the pupils' cultural norms requiring them to keep a low profile while talking - thus adhering to the culture's maxims of the Cooperative Principle - and have nothing to do with their linguistic inability.

#### **4.3.1 The interactional aspect of classroom learning**

The language used in the classroom shapes the social meaning of the classroom. The words and the syntactic structures which are generated by the teacher and the pupils, help the learners not only to learn but also to communicate among themselves. The teacher and the pupils jointly create knowledge through the language and by so doing they carry on the

communication process through which the classroom culture as well as the community's culture gets expressed. It is thus through language and about the language that the dynamics of interaction in a language can be expressed (Breen 1985). This dual aspect of learning about the language and through the language has been comprehensively dealt with by Kramsch (1985) who looks at the way language forms learned in the classroom can be used for further access to knowledge. This can be achieved by three factors, according to Kramsch (1985): the roles of participants, the tasks they do and the knowledge they create.

As pointed out above, the asymmetrical relationship between the teacher and the pupils is institutionalized by what goes on in the classroom. The teacher, armed with a scheme of work and a lesson plan, knows before he enters the classroom, what has to be done by his pupils if he is to achieve his objectives. In doing this he stipulates what knowledge is to be learned and how it is to be learned. He will, for instance, ask short questions of pupils whom he is sure will be able to answer so that his objectives may be realized within the allotted time of the lesson. In classroom discourse, information tends therefore, to flow in one direction (Pica 1987) since it is the teacher who makes decisions about how knowledge is to be dispensed to the pupils, as well as how he elicits. The flow of information is thus usually from the teacher to the pupils and involves very little exchange among them. As Pica (1987:11) points out:

students work not towards mutual understanding with their teachers but at meeting their teachers' expectations as to what is an appropriate response to their questions.

Kramsch (1985) sees classroom interactions as lying between two poles of a continuum: the *instructional options* continuum along which are types of *instructional discourse*. The teacher engaged in a teacher-fronted lesson is envisaged as engaged in *position centered teaching* (Kramsch 1985) since in this position, the role of the participants is *fixed*, whereas one who engages his pupils in pair work or group work would be engaging in *person centered teaching* which involves *negotiated roles*. I would argue that in ideal situations teachers work between both poles of the discourse continuum. A teacher who assigns an exercise in which pupils work individually may be tempted to let them negotiate meaning among themselves in the hope of getting an answer and then go back to work individually. On the other hand, a teacher burdened with a lot of exercise books to correct, could also move along the discourse continuum towards the natural end so as to devote his time to other activities.



The nature of the tasks pupils do will, therefore, influence the role of participants. I shall come back to this when considering the effects of tasks on student-student interactions.

In teacher-oriented teaching the pupil is expected to be listening and to understand. He will be required by his teacher to reply to the teacher's questions thus giving information, expressing opinion or correcting errors. On the other hand, in group oriented or person centered teaching, the pupils will be engaged in initiating turns, seeking and giving information, clarifying, elaborating and summarizing. As pupils move from one pole of the continuum to another, they assume roles denied them when they were engaged in teacher-centered learning as the distribution of tasks and the range of speech acts required to perform those tasks widen. The one way task in which only one answer may be possible (Pica 1986) for instance, may not be well disposed towards modifying input to learners as the language and speech acts employed in this type of task tend to be skewed in favour of the teacher. A teacher-directed lesson may deny pupils the right to negotiate interactions among themselves and thus provide each other with language they can understand in order to carry on their task. In teacher-centered lessons, the teacher's insistence will usually be on form and accuracy since the teacher expects the learners to produce the language that will 'assist' them in understanding the content prepared by him. In group oriented teaching, emphasis will be much more on information communicated (fluency) rather than accuracy, since if the latter is overstressed, learners are likely to disrupt their pattern of thinking and flow of communication.

One of the ways by which knowledge is communicated involves the way the teacher and pupils or the pupils themselves are able to allocate one another turns. In a teacher-controlled classroom, the teacher will select himself to speak first and then select another pupil to reply. The way pupils are able to engage in the interaction will depend on their ability to understand what is said but it will also depend on how they are able to process the information in their schemata, to interpret it and to reply. The way they are going to reply, standing up rather than sitting, as required by the teacher or in full sentences rather than short sentences as the teacher deems linguistically and procedurally appropriate, will to a large extent determine how the class is able to steer the course of learning by maintaining a grip on the topic of the lesson. Achieving this could require learners and teachers to monitor their conversations so that there is no breakdown of communication. In a teacher-centred lesson errors could be

regarded as a stumbling block to communication and might not be tolerated but in group oriented learning where fluency is the main objective, they could be tolerated.

The way in which learners use the language could thus depend on the way as well as what knowledge is exchanged. The interpersonal relations among the learners would also be crucial. The functions performed by language in creating meaning and the specific types of these functions would also be important. I am now going to look into the aspects of language functions (speech acts) in teacher-directed discourse and later relate it to its relevance to writing.

#### **4.3.1.1 Teacher-student interactions and writing**

The constrained nature of classroom discourse has been described as being uncondusive to the pupils engaging in forms of utterance that are likely to make them speak or write what they think is reasonably in line with their own way of thinking. In teacher-fronted discourse learners hardly engage in directives at all as they await the teacher's orders and the teacher's initiating of a point before they say or write something (see Appendix R Transcript xvii for example, and contrast this with the student directed discussion in Transcript xxv). It is also likely that teacher-fronted discourse may inhibit the pupils from ascertaining what they have not yet understood as well as from requesting clarification of content or linguistic forms particularly in an environment where the language teacher assumes an authoritarian stance. In such classroom situations, the language generated by the pupils will basically be in line with the language of the teacher. An assessment of the effectiveness of a teacher-controlled lesson will, therefore, depend to a great extent, on the effects which the teacher's input has on the language production of the FL learner.

I pointed out earlier in this chapter that most of the studies on the relationship between the adult's or mother's input and children's uptake (what the child may have learnt), has mostly been done in the learners native language (L1). The same trend seems to be evinced as regards classroom discourse. The only two studies I am aware of regarding non-native speakers (L2) are those of Ellis (1984a) and Slimani (1989) both of which show no significant relationship between the language of instruction and the pupils' uptake. The rest of the studies have involved native (L1) speakers. These studies have either dealt with the impact of input on the subjects' language in immersion classes (Lightbrown 1983; Hamayan and Tucker 1983; Gaies 1980) or with the way

native speakers are able to adjust their conversation so as to provide non-native speakers with comprehensible input that makes them learn the language (Long 1983; Varonis and Gas 1985; Pica 1986; Pica and Doughty 1987).

Lightbrown (1983) and Gaies (1980) found no direct relationship between the frequency with which certain forms appear in the classroom and the frequency of accuracy of use of these forms. The only notable occurrence was that of the -ing verb forms which were associated not so much with the impact of the teacher's input as with the overlearning of these forms. Hamayan and Tucker (1983) studied how teachers used language in the classroom with L2 learners and their behaviour in relationship to the learners. They looked into how teachers modified their language and also the syntactic features which ensued. The teacher's language was assessed on the basis of the categories of the functions of teacher's utterances which were: questions, repetitions and modelling, and the syntactic features investigated were: indirect questions, subjunctives, prepositions, subjunctives and auxiliaries. They found that open-ended questions were the most often used and that modelling was the least used. They were thus able to establish that the frequency of occurrence of certain syntactic structures in the teacher's speech is related to the learner's production of these structures and that there was no difference between the immersion class and the native speaker class.

The two studies that have attempted to look into the impact of language input on non-native speakers have been those of Ellis (1984a) and Slimani (1989). Ellis tried to find out whether the teaching of certain structures was related to the acquisition of L2 (non-native) speakers' acquisition of those structures. He found that whereas some children benefited considerably from formal instruction others did not. What was surprising was that it was the low interactors who progressed in internalizing these structures. While individual differences have to be taken into account in the acquisition of language, it is also true that the nature of communication and the nature of tasks have an influence on language acquisition. The exercises provided were not communicative and some of the pupils may have thus failed to interact. If they had listened to their fellow pupils, they might have more readily acquired the structures. This leads Ellis (1984a) to argue that for an uptake to be effected, what matters is not how much language is produced but also how much the language learner is able to comprehend. In other words, employing language to make input comprehensible, whether in teacher-fronted lessons or in pairs or groups, is what determines the uptake.

Slimani (1989) in attempting to determine the relationship between classroom interaction and student uptake, found a low correlation between uptake and the teacher's language. There was no close relationship between the use of conversational adjustments and uptake as evidenced by the fact that those who requested clarifications, did not manage to learn the things they learnt through clarification. A parallel to the relationship between the teacher-student interaction and its impact on the learners' input can be gauged from the input which native speakers (NSs) give to non-native speakers (NNSs) in the form of questions, comprehension checks or clarification requests. The relationship could be envisaged as similar to that of students and teachers in classrooms because the fact that a NS knows that he knows the language more than a NNS, makes him feel in a 'superior' position because the NS has the power to maintain the conversation or to cut it off by depriving the NNS of essential scaffolding. Learners are able to advance their ability to listen, understand and express themselves clearly if they are able to ask questions of their interlocutors, to restate or reframe their utterances and to request clarifications. The teacher-fronted situation may not be conducive to this because the learner may decide not to reply if he does not know the answer and wishes to save face or the input may not need to be made comprehensible as the student knows very well what is being talked about. It is also the case that the teacher, fearing a challenge to his authority or knowledge, may not see the need to make input comprehensible and let the pupil rely on him for a solution. However we can assume the latter situation is a rarity rather than the norm and expect that the teacher will try his best to assume the position of a NS who has command of the language and is trying to help a NNS so that they can mutually negotiate meaning.

Long (1983); Pica (1987); Scarcella and Higa (1981) and Varonis and Gass (1985) have attempted to show how NSs are able to reach mutual comprehension with NNSs and avoid communication breakdown. This can be achieved by using such *strategies* as relinquishing topic and checking the interlocutor's comprehension while the latter could be achieved by such *tactics* (Long 1983) as requesting clarification, confirming understanding as well as self correction (so that the interlocutor receives accurate form) or correcting the interlocutor. The fact that teachers may create a classroom situation which could be conducive to learning suggests that the role of input for learning has also some significance in teacher-student discourse. However, since as pointed out earlier, classroom language is often too constrained to allow input to be made comprehensible, there is a need to ascertain whether or not NNSs can

gain access to the required input in the classroom. Let us first turn our attention to how teacher-student interactions could be employed in the teaching and learning of writing. An attempt will be made to look into the verbal patterns of interaction that are likely to ensue during writing and what aspects of these patterns as realized through speech acts, could help in writing.

#### **4.3.1.1.1 Teacher-student interactions and writing**

The current shift from the traditional writing approach which regards writing as a solitary mechanical activity to a situation in which writing is deemed a dynamic communicative process, has made the need for an interactive approach towards writing to be felt more than before. Teachers have to interact with their students either before each writes a composition or participate in *writing conferences* during which teachers interact with their pupils in discussions before they rewrite (revise) their compositions. No longer is it regarded as desirable that the teacher should merely write comments on the margins of an exercise book for the pupil to read and take advantage of when correcting his work or as points to recollect when writing another composition.

A number of studies see teacher-student verbal interactions either before or after writing as conducive to improved writing performance. Studies by Jacobs and Karliner (1877) and Freedman and Katz (1987) have for instance, established how students take turns in conversations leading to the revising of compositions, and show how these turns are more or less similar to the turns in informal discourse and to teacher-student turns and are thus conducive to writing because of the mix between formal and informal discourse that obtains in such conferences. Studies by Jacobs (1987); Dyson and Genishi (1982); Ford (1973); Karengianes, Pascarella and Pflaum (1980) claim a positive relationship between student-student verbalization and improvement in writing but others like those of Putz (1970); Davies and Omberg (1970); and Chaudron (1984) show no relationship between the student -student verbalizations and subsequent improvement in writing. Chaudron (1984) carried out a study to find out if students had greater improvement in their essays when they received peer feedback than when they did not. The results revealed that there was no significant difference between those who received peer feedback and those who did not. Furthermore on exploring the attitudes of the students towards peer evaluation, he found that the responses varied so much that doubts were cast on the efficacy of peer feedback.

When Hillocks (1982) conducted a study to find out which method was the most contributive to students improvement in writing among teacher oral comments , student revision, and writing activities without revising, none of the methods clearly showed the most achievement leading him to conclude that a combination of teacher comments (hence interaction with students), revision and prewriting activities is probably the best. A few other studies have been concerned with how teachers and students communicate by looking into the functions realized by conference talk. They have also looked into how teachers and students interact, though most of them have fallen short of explaining the impact which these interactions had on the students' writing. Freedman and Sperling (1985) and Sperling (1990) found that teacher-student interactions had varied effects on the learners with high achievers producing more talk and more revisions while those relying on the teacher made mostly surface revisions (Freedman and Sperling 1985). On examining teacher's conferencing with six learners, Sperling (1990) found that interactional patterns tended to vary for students according to different purposes, hence revealing that the construction of the conference talk is moulded by the participants' involvement, the purpose and the shifting context of the conference. When he analysed the teacher-student talk, he found that a high percentage of topics was initiated by the teacher and only a smaller percentage by students. Even the few turns initiated by students were interrupted by the teacher. When he examined the functions realized through teacher's and students' utterances, he found that students differed in the amount and kinds of language functions they used.. All six students revealed that they mostly asked each other questions and replied. Requests and directives showed the lowest percentage and the greatest number of initiations was by the teacher. These results reveal that despite the variations in interacting with the teacher, all students showed a dearth of requests, directives and acknowledgments of requests which are vital in constructing propositions and that the teacher's domination of the discourse adversely affected the students' participation.

A few other studies have tried to look into the functions of utterances during writing and how teachers and students realize meaning through these language functions (speech acts). Notable among these studies are those of Walker and Elias (1987) and Goldstein and Conrad (1990). Walker and Elias (1987) found that unsuccessful conferences were characterized by large frequencies of requests for explanation about content or process and they tended to focus on the teacher rather than the student. The high frequency of requests for explanations in poor conferences seems to have been triggered by

the failure of poor achievers to grasp points, a fact which could have made teachers in the low-rated groups spend a lot of time clarifying issues and less time on evaluating work. In contrast high achievers were given more evaluations by their teachers than the low achievers. In this context, the domination of interaction by the teacher in the low-rated groups cannot be said to have been deliberate. Teachers may seem to be giving differential treatment to low performers when they are in fact simply helping them to get through their work. The only dilemma is that while these students need the teacher's assistance, they cannot at the same time engage in the discourse that is likely to help them improve their writing as they will be preoccupied with understanding the teacher's instructions. Moreover, the teacher's help may actually interfere with the learner's train of thought.

The second study that has attempted to examine conference writing discourse is that of Goldstein and Conrad (1990). Although they were able to establish that conferencing leads to a clarification of meanings, expression of ideas and opinions and asking of questions, Goldstein and Conrad found that subjects differed in the way they interacted with the teacher. Teachers tended to direct questions to those they wanted to help. However, this did not help these students much as evidenced by an instance of a student whose teacher generated most of the input while the student merely backchannelled. Goldstein and Conrad (1990) were thus led to conclude that although conferences help pupils to clarify meanings and express themselves, they do not necessarily result in student output and successful revisions.

The need for making writing as interactive as possible has led to the use of interactive *dialogue journal communication* as a strategy for teaching and learning writing in America (Graves 1983; Shuy 1987; Staton 1988; Staton and Shuy 1987)) which as I pointed out in Chapter Two, involves written personal communication between the teacher and the students. It is anticipated that by exchanging notes the teacher and his pupils will be more or less involved in a form of communication not dissimilar from that of informal talk and hence dialogue journals are seen as a bridge between oral language and written language. Journal language, however, deprives the pupil of face-to-face interaction with the teacher and cannot be regarded as being very different from the written comments teachers make on exercise books. The exchanges could also be so informal as to make the pupils use language that may not help them much when they are writing in other school subjects. It is evident that no clear cut agreement prevails as regards the usefulness of dialogue journals in

helping learners to write, although the journals' language is envisaged to have discourse features that are similar to those of writing conferences. Having seen the constraints which face both student-student verbal interactions and teacher-student interactions in writing, let us direct our attention to student-student interactions and ascertain to what extent this aspect of learning is likely to lead to improvement in classroom communication and subsequently in writing.

#### **4.3.1.2 Student-student interactions and negotiation of meaning: a review of studies**

The entire purpose of interaction between two speakers or between a reader and a text is to reach a consensus with the interlocutor or with the text and make meaning. Speakers as well as writers are thus involved in negotiating meaning. We have seen that in all forms of conversation, speakers have to reach agreement through the way they transact turns and exchange information. We have also seen that children may also be able to negotiate meaning before they even develop holophrasis by using their hands while pointing or gestures to attract their mothers' attention. The expression of intention thus becomes the *sine qua non* of negotiating meaning.

The acquisition of language by the child, at a later stage, does not yet confer on him the opportunity to express himself clearly and he will still need some support or "scaffolding" (Wood, Bruner and Ross 1976; Bruner 1975; Ninio and Bruner 1978; Applebee and Langer 1983; Langer and Applebee 1986; Pallincsar 1986; Palincsar and Brown 1984; 1989) so as to negotiate meaning with his mother. The basic notion of negotiation of meaning means that the child or the learner has to reach mutual comprehension of the subject or something he wants with his mother before he can get it. Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) posit the following as conditions for scaffolding : the simplification of tasks so that they are within the level of the learner's comprehension, which Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) call "reduction of degrees of freedom"; "direction maintenance" or steering the learner to motivation; "frustration control" or a less threatening atmosphere and modelling provided by the teacher so that the learner can imitate it later in appropriate form. The authors do not point out which of these would have to get priority and whether all conditions are appropriate to all tasks but we can hope that the operationalization of these conditions would depend on the tasks, level of participants and the context of the task.



Forman and Cazden (1985) and Pallincsar and Brown (1984; 1989) regard peer tutoring (in which a tutor or a more knowledgeable peer informs and guides a tuttee) as an example of negotiation of meaning. In peer tutoring activities, speech is internalized (Piaget 1969) as peers interact and there is an enhancement of logical reasoning through cognitive reorganization induced by the cognitive conflict. The latter involves arguments and conflict resolution during problem solving until individuals who are trying to coordinate their conflicting perspectives on a problem, reach a consensus. In a study to ascertain how children can engage in problem solving, Forman and Cazden (1985) asked children to cooperate in the solution of a logical problem. The solution involved a chemical reaction consisting of a series of problems ordered in terms of logical complexity. After a demonstration had been given, the children were asked a few questions and then grouped into dyads who mixed a combination of chemicals they had selected. The children were later instructed to identify which chemicals were responsible for the changes they saw in the experiments. The subjects had to distribute and arrange task material, choose chemical experiments and record them. Three types of groups were chosen: parallel groups who shared material but did not see each other's work, associative groups who exchanged information but never coordinated their work or results and the cooperative dyads who monitored each other's work and played coordinated roles in performing task procedures. The results of the study revealed that students who worked in pairs showed greater progress than those working alone, though the former did not show great pretest and posttest gains. The subjects were found to display more sophisticated problem solving strategies when they assisted each other than when working alone. Although collaborative problem solvers did not do better than solitary problem solvers, collaborative partners were able to solve many more chemical problems than could solitary problem solvers during the same period of time.

The above results corroborate Piaget's notion of *equilibration* or *self-regulation* which he regards as crucial in the child's development. Piaget sees the solution of problems through *cognitive conflict* whereas Vygotsky (1978) sees the solutions as arising through social interaction. The fact that although individuals were able to solve problems faster, pairs were able to do better on combination problems shows that the cognitive conflict in turn results in cognitive restructuring (Forman and Cazden 1985) which when combined with the problem solvers' social interaction, lead to the solution of the problems. It appears therefore, that the complexity of a task beyond one individual's ability to solve can also be one of the factors that bring about the negotiation of

meaning, a fact supported by Krashen (1982) who contends that a task should not only be comprehensible and be conducted in a non-threatening atmosphere but must also be slightly above the level of the pupil so that it provides some challenge that will evoke some negotiation. The fact that the pairs were dealing with the more challenging combination problems gave the pupils the challenge (cognitive conflict) and the opportunity to formulate strategies much better than individuals working alone.

Pallincsar and Brown (1984; 1989) devised reading comprehension training studies based on the notion that the intra-psychological (individual) skills could best be developed by inter-psychological (teacher-student) activities. They developed reciprocal teaching which involves adults guiding the student to interact with the text until the student takes over the teaching role so that he can teach someone who is less able. The low-rated students used reciprocal teaching procedures based on: summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting to improve reading comprehension. Students were divided into four groups. Two groups received regular instruction, one group engaged in reciprocal teaching, one group was to locate information in ways taught in remedial reading classes and two groups did not receive treatment. The reciprocal teaching students worked in groups of two with an adult. A passage was introduced daily and teachers and students took turns generating summaries and questions, clarifying more complex sections of the text. Students and teachers took turns playing the role of the teacher. The results indicated that the reciprocal teaching activity led to significant improvements in the quality of the summaries given and questions asked in performance of tests. These studies show that the learner can be enabled to solve problems by negotiating with others so as to complete the task. The strategy is also learner-centered as the teacher shifts his responsibility to the learner and makes the learner more committed as he feels proud of assuming the teacher's role. Moreover, the fact that all members of the group jointly construct meaning through clarification, summaries and predictions, means that they are engaging in communicative acts which are quite useful in generating and expanding meaning. It is not clear however, whether reciprocal teaching would be appropriate to NNSs who find it difficult to express themselves nor is it clear whether reciprocal teaching would be appropriate for all tasks.

#### 4.3.1.3 Discourse and the negotiation of meaning

So far we seem to have taken the term *negotiation of meaning* for granted. The term keeps cropping up so often in the literature on language acquisition and discourse that it has become a buzzword. In language acquisition literature, the phrase refers to the way children or learners are able to construct meaning in the course of socially interacting with adults, teachers or peers and attempt as much as they can to avoid breakdown of communication (Long 1983; Pica et al 1989). The term now seems to transcend interpersonal relationship and encompasses also how this interpersonal relationship can be a platform for the creation of discourse. In writing, which is devoid of physical presence, negotiation has to be seen differently from speaking. Since the interpersonal relationship is realized through covert interaction between the reader and the writer (Widdowson 1984), it can only be understood by having recourse to the way the reader and the writer are able to reciprocate so that the writer conveys his intended message and the reader understands it.

In spoken discourse, communication is said to be achieved when the speaker utters a proposition and expresses his illocutionary intent both of which are supposed to be not only "accessible" but also "acceptable" (Widdowson 1984) to the reader. Widdowson argues that the first can be achieved when the speaker and the interlocutor share a common frame of reference. The common frame of reference is a situation in which both the speaker and the interlocutor know what is being spoken about judging from their personal experiences as well as the knowledge that may accrue from school knowledge. Since this knowledge is being conveyed through language, it is apparent that knowledge of the language of the interlocutors would be expected to be of more or less same level. The acceptability of what is communicated would, according to Widdowson (1984), relate to the power and solidarity dimension. The latter is related to the way the speaker or his interlocutor thinks he is able to enter his reader's territory or the *territorial imperative* as Widdowson (1984) calls it, without the norms of *the cooperative imperative* on which the rules governing the interlocutor's communicative behaviour are based.

Making an inroad into one's territory would be intruding into his privacy or security. Nevertheless, where there is diversity in the power relations between the interlocutors, the one with greater power and status would be expected to make an inroad into the other's territory, perhaps without even caring much about the former's security as teachers are wont to do to their pupils and

doctors to their patients. Entering into other's territory becomes necessary if negotiation and communication is to be attained. Teachers have to intrude upon their pupils to carry on lessons just as lawyers need to intrude upon their clients' activities before they can know how to act competently on their behalf. The teacher can - and almost always does - assert his authority to ensure that learning takes place. The lawyer may do the same, however more tactfully, to assert his authority by virtue of his qualification and ability to represent his client. Both teachers and lawyers exert their authority knowing that it will be accepted. Despite their acting from a position of strength, lawyers realize how their lack of tact could lead to their losing clients. Teachers too realize that maintaining a social distance may hinder their pupils from interacting with them effectively. Negotiation skills are thus required before interaction can take place. The negotiation of meaning is thus inextricably linked with the maintenance of interpersonal relations.

#### **4.3.1.4 Written discourse and the negotiation of meaning**

Written discourse is said to be a covert form of interaction (Widdowson 1984) in which the writer attempts to reach some convergence with his readers. In doing so the writer considers both the knowledge and the language of his intended readers. This means that he has to use words and expressions which might be said to compensate for the missing physical context which conversation would have assured him. Unlike the speaker who is usually wary of what to say because he tries to predict as he is speaking what his interlocutor will say, the writer is much more concerned with how effectively he is conveying his message. He thus does not pay much attention to how readers will make an inroad into his personality by their criticism or disapproval of what he writes. In other words, the writer is much more concerned with accessibility rather than acceptability. The writer's main concern "is not so much to avoid conflict as to create conditions for an engagement, and to this end he will sometimes provoke reactions by flouting acceptability" (Widdowson 1984:90). I would argue that for both social and ideological reasons, writers need to walk a tightrope of both accessibility and acceptability for the sake of carrying their message home and for fear of antagonizing their would-be readers especially if they are writing on a socially and politically sensitive issue. They are, nevertheless, still spared the constraint of stressfully anticipating how their readers will react, as speakers constantly are.. Writers are, therefore, much more concerned with what Nystrand (1986) calls the *context of production* or stage at which they create a text rather than with the *context of use* or occasion

at which the text is processed by the reader. The reader can decide to assume an assertive position or a submissive position (Widdowson 1984) by adopting a different position from that of the author, or succumb to the the writer's opinions because either the reader feels he is not conversant with the subject matter or because the content is embedded in language which the reader cannot understand.

Establishing a mutual frame of reference or reciprocity (Nystrand 1986) between the writer and his readers is therefore, a process which, unlike in speech, does not take place simultaneously. Whereas in speech the context of production and the context of use are simultaneous, in writing the two are separable. However, the context of use impinges upon the writer and the reader although the reader is much more affected. While during the context of production "the writer must skilfully treat potential trouble sources like complicated terms or ideas which might threaten reciprocity in a context of eventual use such as future reference, ..." (Nystrand 1986:48), he remains bound to be assertive and let readers interpret as they wish, though the readers themselves are in a position to be equally assertive. Widdowson (1984:94) however, warns of the fact that adopting an extreme position of assertiveness or submissiveness on the part of the reader could derail the cause of communication and reciprocity.

If he is too assertive, there is a danger that he may distort the writer's intention and deny access to knowledge and experience. If he is too submissive, he runs the risk of accumulating information without the discrimination necessary to incorporate it into the schematic structure of existing knowledge.

It might appear from the foregoing that the reader has to make more concessions than the writer in the reciprocal process of negotiating meaning and that in view of this, writing is less interactive or communicative than speaking. This may not be entirely the case because both the writer and the readers, knowing each other's expectations, will ensure that these expectations are realized. How much negotiation a particular form of writing entails, will of course, depend on the purpose of the text as well as how prepared the readers are knowledgewise and linguistically to adjust themselves to the text. How the writer negotiates with his readers before they read his science teaching text, for example, will differ from the way he does it when he is writing a text on a political issue. Because of the non-sensitive aspect of a science teaching text, the writer may devote his energy entirely to attempting to make it accessible without necessarily making it acceptable, but he will at least show a little care to

ensure that his text will be given a semblance of acceptability. In thus negotiating, the writer is constructing both the meaning of the text as well as the language through which its meaning is realized.

The meaning and language constructed in a science text will definitely differ from the meaning and language constructed in a novel or in a religious tract. The way the writer goes about constructing the meaning and the language in the different pieces of discourse will also vary. He might start the first chapter of his science teaching text with a definition of a scientific term or concept and then go on to explain it giving examples before elaborating and summarizing the chapter at the end. A medical report could start with a general statement of the state of affairs and go on, probably to give the chemical composition of a newly discovered drug without going through the nuances of elaboration. Whichever expressions are used to show the writer's intentions will depend on the nature of the writing. I would now like to provide a review of studies on writing tasks and relate them to the way learners negotiate meaning before writing as well as to how different tasks may make different cognitive and linguistic demands.

#### **4.3.1.4.1 Writing tasks and the negotiation of meaning**

It will be recalled that in Chapter Two I briefly mentioned language learning tasks with regard to how they aid the acquisition of written language. I do not intend to deliberately repeat what has been mentioned. However, I will give some account of some of the studies that may have been glossed over and others with particular focus on the way various tasks are able to realize discourse and speech acts so as to indicate the meaning encoded in the text. I will start by giving an overview of task based language learning.

#### **4.3.1.5. Task based language learning**

##### **4.3.1.5.1 The concept of language tasks and the curriculum**

Tasks constitute an important component in the implementation of a curriculum. The objectives of a curriculum as stipulated in the syllabus are contained in the teacher's scheme of work and are fulfilled when teachers and pupils participate in carrying out tasks in lessons. The goals of education as embodied in the curriculum and the procedures teachers choose to carry out the activities for the implementation of tasks thus determine the nature of tasks. Breen (1987:23)

provides a comprehensive definition of tasks when he defines language learning tasks as

any structural language learning endeavor which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task. 'Task' is therefore assumed to refer to a range of workplans which have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning - from the simple and brief exercise type to more complex and lengthy activities such as group problem-solving or simulations and decision making.

The fact that the objectives of language learning get set not by the teacher but are embodied in the country's educational aims, has made task based language learning to be seen not only within the context of activities carried out in the classroom but also within the overall educational goal of the society. These goals will then be matched with the needs of the learners, but since the needs of the learners are often subsumed under the educational goals of the nation, the learner's needs will certainly be tailored to the country's objectives for learning a particular subject. How these needs are to be realized may not be so much the work of educational officials as that of the target language experts and teachers who will have to exploit their knowledge of language learning theories and apply them to carrying out language activities so as to ensure that language learning is facilitated.

Traditionally, curriculum designers and book writers have tended to select activities to be learned according to the curriculum goals specified in the language structures or items that were to be taught: phonological, morpho-syntactic and lexical. In other words, the items were given precedence and the activities were then chosen to bring about the learning of these items.

#### **4.3.1.5.2 The selection of tasks**

Task based learning has as its central rationale, the needs of the learners and how these needs can be realized through language. The pedagogic task is then selected to fit in with the target task or real world situation which the learner is expected to encounter, such as engineering. The model is then provided for language items that the learner will practice in order to carry out the appropriate tasks.

Long (1985:91) sees target tasks as

tasks identified as required in order for the individual to fit adequately into a particular target domain be it occupational or academic

and pedagogical tasks as the tasks that teachers and students will actually carry out in the classroom. The pedagogical tasks thus become important components in the realization of students' language needs through the target tasks. The needs of the learners will be determined by two considerations. On the one hand these needs will depend on what I will call the internal needs of the learner namely, the learner's needs at school or other educational institution, such as the ability to communicate well orally and in writing so that the learner can get along well at school with his peers and teachers, and the need to take notes and write essays in school subjects. On the other hand, the external needs will take account of the learner's needs to survive in a community he is to encounter after school especially if he expects to work in a foreign country where knowledge of the target language is the only means of social contact. He may also be required to make use of the language at his place of work. The question then is, how will the activities be encapsulated in the pedagogical task to make this possible?

The activities chosen for a task will usually take account of the learner's level of proficiency and previous language background as well as the learner's knowledge-specific domain. Language structures that are germane to the linguistic background and the knowledge-specific domain will then be taught. The language items a stenographer has to learn would definitely be of a higher level than those learnt by a copy typist. Though both of them may be working within the same context, the fact that the work of each requires a particular focus and orientation means that their learning orientations will differ even if both of them need to learn *wh-* questions or the auxiliaries (can, would, should) common in the language of interviews or telephoning. Task-based learning thus seems to be in consonance with the teaching of language for use in special contexts (ESP) as well as the need to learn language that one is likely to use outside the classroom. The following are the features which Nunan (1991:279) regards as characterizing task-based language teaching:

1. An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language
2. The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation
3. The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language, but also on the learning process
4. An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning



5. An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

Devising a pedagogic task in order to make the learner know the language for use at school as well as outside the school could thus be a crucial step after we have investigated the learner's needs and the way we select activities and exercises to make the learner learn the content we have selected. Nunan (1991) shows the steps involved in preparing a pedagogical task which has the objective of attaining the above five objectives in the Figure below regarding a task on "giving information in a job interview".

Steps involved in the Development of a Pedagogic Task (from Nunan 1991:282)

Procedure	Example	Rationale
1. Identify target tasks	Giving personal information in a job interview	To give learners the opportunity to develop language skills relevant to their real world needs
2. Provide model	Students listen to and extract key information from authentic/simulated interview	To provide learners with the opportunity to listen to and analyse ways in which native speakers or users of the target language carry out the target task
3. Identifying enabling language <i>wh</i> - questions <i>do</i> - questions etc	Manipulating drill to practice language forms and provide guided practice	To provide learners with explicit skills in those grammatical elements needed to perform the target task
4. Devise pedagogic task	Interview simulation using role cards	To provide learners the opportunity to mobilize their emerging language skills through rehearsal.

#### 4.3.1.5.3 Key elements of tasks

Tasks are carried out in the social context of the classroom where the teacher and his students are engaged in social acts. The teacher and students are also involved in cognitive acts as well as pragmatic acts since they have to ensure that they are skilful enough to carry out those acts. It is in view of this that Candlin (1987) regards communicative competence as being both cognitive and pragmatic. In other words it is not only the knowledge we impart to the learner that matters but also the way we go about imparting it. While knowledge may be predetermined for the learner in the form of a syllabus or the teacher's scheme of work, the procedure for carrying it out would depend on whether or not the classroom context is a restricted one requiring the execution of the task.

to be the prerogative of the teacher or is flexible enough to allow pupils to participate in the decision making process. The latter might be a controversial issue though I would posit that giving freedom to pupils to decide about procedures could be a good measure of democracy but it may not necessarily ensure that orderly and effective teaching takes place.

Whichever decision is made and whatever the context of learning, certain factors will need to be fulfilled as key elements of task based learning. Candlin (1987) offers the following factors: *input, roles, settings, actions, monitoring, outcomes* and *feedback*. The input refers not only to the language that learners get from the teacher but also to the personal experiences learners are likely to bring into the language classroom either from their homes or from the community around the school. The roles of the classroom participants "in relation to the accomplishment of the task and their roles in respect of their relationship to each other" (Breen 1987:11) are shared by the teacher and the learners or may be largely monopolized by the teacher. The rights to initiate topics and allocate turns will be determined by this relationship just as will be the decision on how the students are going to carry out the pedagogical tasks. These roles cannot, however, be said to be fixed. Variations in the distribution of these roles will depend on the context of the classroom and the nature of the tasks.

Some of the factors affecting the role of participants could be outside the context of the classroom as evidenced by Wright (1987) who observed a L2 classroom in which the learners did a grammar exercise, read aloud and filled in the blanks. Although the trainee-teacher initially adhered to the common Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) pattern of the classroom, he had to revert to the reading of a textbook and relinquish the planned IRF pattern as he faced challenge from the pupils.

The setting of the classroom which shows whether it is the teacher-fronted pattern or the pair/group work pattern that is encouraged, is likely to provide an insight into the nature of the relationship between the teacher and students as is the case for a teacher-controlled class with fixed desks which give little opportunity for a large class to work in pairs or groups. What sort of behaviour is expected from learners who are engaged in either teacher -controlled or group work tasks and the action the teacher either alone or in conjunction with his pupils takes to realize the behaviour through multiple choice questions (to avoid devoting much time to corrections) or essays (to test actual

knowledge), will very much affect the manner in which the tasks are done. Similarly, what is expected from the assigned tasks and the way the expected outcome is to be evaluated (whether by the teacher's remarks at the margins of an exercise book or by pupils marking their work in groups), will have an impact not only on the way we carry out the tasks but also on the knowledge expected from the tasks. The task based language syllabus thus provides more scope than the 'traditional' syllabus for negotiation of meaning between the teacher and the learners, a negotiation that is not just for the sake of learning but for the sake of using the language for meaningful purposes. Some attention will now be devoted to a review of studies on the role of tasks in teacher-student interactions and student-student interactions particularly with regard to how interactions help language acquisition and later an attempt will be made to relate the role of interaction to writing.

#### **4.3.1.5.4 Interaction and language learning tasks: review and implications**

The importance of knowledge of second language acquisition and the increased interest in communicative teaching as a method of facilitating acquisition of language has led to a number of studies on how interactional modifications are achieved and about classroom tasks that are conducive to bringing this about. A number of these studies have dealt with how EFL/ESL learners are likely to have comprehensible input if they interact with native speakers of English (Varonis and Gass 1985; Pica et al 1989) while others have dealt with how NNS learners can provide each other with comprehensible input despite their poor language resources (Long, Adams, McLean and Castanos 1976; Long and Porter 1985; Porter 1986; Bruton and Samuda 1980; Pica and Doughty 1988; Rulon and McCreary 1986; Brown 1991; Yule and Macdonald 1990; Flanagan 1991). Only a few studies have shown that there is no link between student-student interaction and the acquisition of modified language input (Politzer and McGroarty 1985; Doughty and Pica 1986; Pica and Doughty 1985)

Studies which support the view that there is a relationship between interaction and language learning posit that interaction modification devices such as confirmation checks, clarification checks, clarification requests, repetitions, questions and expansions, aid the acquisition of language. Pica et al (1989) on the other hand grounded their study on Swain's (1985) *output* theory. According to Swain comprehensible input is not enough by itself. It needs to be

supplemented by comprehensible output. Comprehensible output is believed to be structured when learners interact with others so that when they fail to understand their fellow interlocutors, they will request clarification or confirmation of statements and by doing this they modify their initial output and gain experience with the new structures and forms of language provided. In other words mere comprehension of input is not enough. Learners must be able to practise and put the morpho-syntax acquired to use. Of equal importance is the way learners are able to employ the interactional devices and the morpho-syntax in the execution of various tasks.

Language learning tasks tend to have been ascribed enough names to make it difficult to distinguish whether one type of task is different from another. We have the *open/loose* or *closed/tight* tasks (Barnes and Todd 1977) which require the learner to provide only one answer or various options; *one way* or *two way* tasks in which interaction is largely directed from one direction (i.e. from the teacher), as distinct from a two way task involving exchange of information in pair or group work in which each participant possesses some piece of information not known to but needed by all other participants to solve a problem. There are also *decision making* or *divergent* tasks and *convergent* or *problem solving* tasks (Pica and Doughty 1988; Duff 1986). According to Pica and Doughty (1988) a decision making task does not oblige individual participants to share with others information known only to themselves. Duff (1986) calls it a divergent task because in doing this type of task, pairs of learners are assigned different viewpoints on an issue and are asked to defend the given position, whereas in the problem solving or convergent task, pairs are asked to solve a given problem together and reach a mutually acceptable solution. In this type of task, it is envisaged that there will be "a certain degree of recycling of language related to the problem" (Duff 1986:150). Recent literature is replete with other names such as *interpretive* tasks and *procedural* tasks (Brown 1991). Whatever the proliferation of names, what is significant is that these names are a pointer to the demands made by the nature of tasks and the expectations that arise from these tasks. Thus a problem solving task could also be interpretive if learners exchange information that requires making interpretations.

An examination of the tasks and the conversational adjustments they generate is important because tasks may generate different interactional patterns and language depending on the context in which the tasks occur and the opportunity afforded to the learners to generate these features. In his study Duff

(1986) assigned a decision making task (a debate) and a problem solving task. The results revealed that the problem solving task had more collaboration checks, expressives and rhetorical questions and generated a significantly greater number of turns than the decision making task, although the latter had more comprehension checks and clarification requests. Extended discourse was generated as the subjects in the debate made contributions through questioning, paraphrasing and commenting. Duff (1986) argues that because of the extended discourse and syntactic complexity, the decision making task may have inhibited learners from acquiring input that was comprehensible thus making the decision making task less appropriate than the problem solving task to learning. Pica and Doughty (1986) assigned an information gap task requiring a two-way exchange of information. The tasks were carried out in a teacher-fronted situation and in group work. They involved garden planting and decision making. The results revealed that there were more modifications and interactions in group work. However, it was also noticed that some groups had less to say in groups and thus had less modified input when they were left to themselves without the teacher's support. This meant that although groupwork provided learners with an opportunity to negotiate meaning, it only became effective in the teacher's presence. The teacher's role is thus seen to be crucial not only in providing the needed linguistic input but also in creating a favorable environment for learners to negotiate meaning.

When Pica and Doughty (1988) replicated the above study, they found that irrespective of whether the task was related to *required* information exchange or *optional* information exchange, they found that the teacher-fronted situation generated a good deal of linguistic production but more than half of this was unmodified utterances, whereas group work engendered less total production. A task requiring exchange of information was characterized by more conversational modifications than those in the teacher-fronted activity, thus confirming that not only is the teacher's presence required but the nature of the task is also important in modifying input. If the production of oral language has been closely identified with interactions, in what way can the modifications of interaction enjoyed in oral discourse be translated into written discourse? Two issues are worth considering here. One is the fact that pupils are still required to write individually in examinations, just as they will be expected to do after school, and so collaborative writing cannot be regarded as a solution to children's problem in writing. Secondly, unlike oral discourse, writing lacks the overt interactions we see in speaking. The writer can either benefit from the input he receives from his peers before he writes or he can, if given a

communicative task, silently engage with his text putting into it the resources he thinks he could have gathered from a discussion group. However, since conference writing and pre-writing discussion groups now seem to be gaining currency in some countries, it is worth reviewing some studies carried out to determine the role of interaction and speech acts in writing and see whether these could help to throw some light into how writing in schools can be improved.

#### **4.3.1.5.5 Tasks, writing and student-student interactions**

##### **4.3.1.5.5.1 Review of studies**

Unlike studies on oral interactions in learning groups, there is little about how learners interact before they write and the written products that ensue as a result of the interactions. Studies on interactive writing have usually been about revisions that take place in writing conferences after students have written their compositions. Other studies have been about the interactions that take place as learners are writing using computers (King 1989; Clements and Nastasi 1988; Allen 1988; Hawkins et al 1982; Fish and Feldman 1989; Webb, Ender and Lewis 1986).

The introduction of computers into language teaching has added another dimension to knowledge about interactions in the classroom. Pupils can work in pairs or groups on a programme and the writing activities they engage in approximate the activities of writers in groups since the pupils can question one another, clarify statements or elaborate them before they print hard copy with computers. I have some doubts regarding the effectiveness of computers in promoting social interaction and in improving writing. In the first place, computers seem to detach the pupils from the social contact we have seen to be important as they interact with adults and also to classroom groups interacting with teachers or fellow students. The fact that learners have to listen to interlocutors and to the machines' commands could be taxing to the minds of the learners. The context in which writing by computers takes place seems to be out of tune with the personalized writing which individual pupils are required to undertake in classrooms unless each of them can have access to the computer during the writing of the composition. However the fact that during writing learners engage in speech acts that guide them to write, tells us something about the relationship between interaction and writing.

Studies which have highlighted the basic functions of utterances in pre-writing or post-writing activities have attempted to show speech acts which learners may find useful when interacting before they write. Not all speech acts can be deemed important to writing since some of them may only be helping learners to get along in the tasks. Similarly not all speech acts can be harnessed in the execution of the same task. The studies of Gere and Abbott (1985); Daiute (1986) and Daiute and Dalton (1988) are a few of the studies that have attempted to look into student-student interactions in writing activities. Gere and Abbott (1985) looked into the language functions (speech acts) elicited during student-student conferences. They found that the focus of the students' attention on discourse varied with grade level and the mode of discourse. They found that the younger students showed more interest in content than the older students who instead showed concern for form (language) particularly with narratives rather than expository writing. Senior students gave more directive comments on narratives and used a richer, and more abstract language than the younger ones. The older students also asked each other more questions, made more references to previous comments and were more responsive to language which appeared to be more phatic with narratives than with expository writing.

Basing their study on Vygotsky's (1962;1978) views of internalizing social experience and Piaget's concept of cognitive conflict, Daiute (1986) and Daiute and Dalton (1988) tried to find out how writers can become conscious of and perceptive to other points of view which may be different from theirs, and also tried to find out how the learners were able to use verbal resources to resolve these differences. (cognitive conflict). They tried to find out if collaboration could lead to a resolution of cognitive conflict through monitoring, clarifying, evaluating, explaining, discussing and conversational directives such as confirming and disconfirming. They found that students devoted less energy to checking mechanics (spelling, punctuation, and grammar) than evaluating and negotiating about the story. The negotiation episodes were characterized by initiation, uptake, elaboration and resolution. Arndt (1987) being interested in the strategies writers employ during writing, found that the six writers she investigated employed strategies and speech acts differently. While some spent much time planning what to write, others spent much of their time on words and on rereading what they had written down. However, the subjects verbalized clarifications and elaborations frequently but these clarifications and elaborations were not included in the written texts.

The impact of interaction on varying tasks has also received attention in a few studies. These studies have been mainly related to either the speech acts writers engage in during revision or to the language features that arise as a result of the interactions. Newell (1984) for example, found that different types of writing tasks led students to thinking about content in a different way and hence led to the different ways they approached the notes or compositions which they wrote. The essays were found to require much more verbalization than note taking and the essays were more coherently integrated than were notes. Durst (1987) attempted to find out how students would react to an analytic task requiring students to elicit a thesis statement with some supporting detail and a summary task based on a passage requiring students to restate what they had read. It was found that learners employed evaluative statements, descriptions and summaries when doing an analytic task but when summarizing they barely went beyond retrieving and restating content. Moreover, they appeared less concerned with monitoring their writing than they were when writing essays. The two tasks also displayed different linguistic features. The analytic task showed such linguistic features as additives (conjunctions and coordinators) which display cohesion (e.g. and, also, too) while the summary task was characterized by features common to narratives such as temporal conjunctions (e.g. after, when, then). The fact that essays tend to involve more planning of ideas than summaries which involve ideas based on the text, could have led to subjects employing more cognitively demanding strategies and hence more complex language features. When they investigated how differently their subjects wrote factual compositions, Aho and Julkunen (1987) found that narratives contained scanty descriptions while factual essays created an environment conducive to discussion among pupils and led to drawing conclusions, explaining things and showing some relationship between phenomena.

The inability of pupils to take the perspectives of others when writing has been attributed to their egocentric behaviour (Piaget 1969). Pupils will usually use the first person (I or we) or second person when explaining something and they might also use expressions and lexical items which do not suit the genre they are writing in. The words will usually be informal and reflect the conversational language children are used to. Similarly, children at the elementary level will tend to use the definite article at the beginning of a sentence even if the sentence tells about a referent that has not been mentioned before, thus showing the children's inability to perceive what is shared knowledge and what is not and to negotiate with their readers. The fact that most of the writing tasks



in schools are still directed to the teacher as examiner (Britton et al 1975; Rosen 1972/73; Rosen and Rosen 1973) makes the teacher the focus of attention by pupils when they are writing. Rather than write to be read and understood by readers other than the teacher, the children will write about things that only the classroom teacher may be aware of. This form of writing will involve writing facts or simple stories and will be detached from real-life situations. Newell, Suszynski and Weingart (1989) sought to examine how personal (reader based) writing differs from formal (text based) writing and what knowledge students would construe from exercises based on the two types of tasks. The expectation from the study was that writing tasks that allow students to apply their personal frames of reference in interpreting tasks would provide them with an opportunity to elaborate on the meanings they created. In personal writing students were to explain and elaborate on how they personally interpreted the story whereas in formal writing the students were to interpret the story by drawing inferences from the text alone. Newell et al give these examples to illustrate the point: How do you think T.J affected the gang? The answer is a matter of personal opinion so personal or reader based; How did T.J. emerge as leader of the gang? The answer is to be found in the story as narrated so formal or text based.

In the reader based tests the subjects were expected to describe the relationship between characters by stating and comparing the characters' relationship to their own relationships and experience while in the text-based tests, the subjects had to prove statements and support ideas by drawing on specific examples from the story. The results of the study revealed that when they wrote personal/reader-based essays, the pupils showed greater elaboration of points and they wrote significantly more words though there was no significant linguistic differences between their essays primarily because they were writing on the same topic. Personal/reader based essays showed that students were more concerned with exploring meanings of events and character than detailing ideas in the story, as evidenced in their extended discourse. Peyton et al (1990) did their study on a similar theme. They assigned three writing tasks: dialogue journal writing, a personal letter and an essay. Because students were writing to a known audience and on the basis of their personal experience in dialogue journal writing and personal letters rather than essays, the dialogue journals and letters showed a greater syntactic complexity, a greater variety of clause connectors, lower relative frequency of repetitions and collocational ties than essays. They also displayed more coherence than the essays. Although the essay was supported by considerable classroom

discussion prior to writing, it did not generate the same linguistic complexity because, it is suggested, it was not directed to any particular audience and did not call for students to express their personal experiences.

#### **4.3.2 Review of theory and relevance to the study**

The studies reviewed in this chapter tell us that different writing tasks call not only for different cognitive and linguistic knowledge but also for different interpretations. The extent to which learners are likely to negotiate meaning affects their cognitive conflict and the language input they are likely to get. It is significant therefore that the way the task is presented to the learner should clearly reflect what we expect the learner to do in negotiating meaning and bringing his personal experience to bear on the task. Information gap (two way) tasks that have proved useful in making learners negotiate meaning in speech could also be applied to writing by making the learners discuss before writing or by using pictures and charts which make learners relate what they learn from them to their personal experiences. A correct balance has, however, to be maintained between reader-based tasks and formal tasks depending on the needs of the learners and the language items being learned.

It has to be admitted however, as Aston (1986) observes, that attributing the interactions to the modification of input and to pupils' success in performing tasks may not be adequate unless we examine carefully whether the interactive patterns perform the functions we think they do. The fact that some children are able to engage in more comprehension checks and clarification requests than others may not be so much an indication of their ability to hold a conversation as a sign either that they may have failed to understand the subject they are discussing altogether or that they have made a serious effort to understand it. Among NNSs, comprehension checks and clarification requests invariably lead to short answers which do not benefit those who seek clarifications. On the other hand, because of their linguistic incompetence, learners may not always employ the 'right' speech acts to negotiate meaning. It is therefore, possible that what the observer regards as a confirmation check could merely be a frame or hedge (conversational initiator) designed to maintain the flow of information or show solidarity as in the use of "eeh?" which could be a confirmation check, an acknowledgement or a comprehension check or a show of surprise (See , Appendix R , Transcript xxiii)..

The use of speech acts has thus to be seen within the socio-cultural context in which they are used in order to determine whether they are used to make

utterances clear and contribute to language learning or whether they are used simply to maintain rapport between the interlocutors. What this means therefore, is that we may not be absolutely sure whether or not a particular task is likely to elicit the speech act we anticipate. On the other hand, the way we arrange the class to learn, whether as individuals, in pairs or groups, could determine how much effort they are likely to apply in undertaking the task and negotiating turns and employing speech acts. The interesting or uninteresting nature of the task could also determine how involved in the task the students are likely to be. The comprehensibility of output cannot therefore, be seen against the background of the frequency of speech acts and the nature of the tasks alone.

The conversational modifications speakers are likely to employ in solving a task and how learners are likely to use these modifications from oral discourse in written discourse will determine how far we are likely to relate the oral interactions to writing. Because of the cognitive and linguistic difficulty posed by writing, learners engaged in verbalizations may not easily transfer the discourse features they employ in speech directly to writing (Arndt 1987); as the physical act of writing and pausing while thinking about what to write could interfere with the train of thought (Bereiter, Scardamalia and Goelman 1982). Moreover, engaging in writing involves going into a different language system distinct from conversational language, a system devoid of the support which the speaker gets when he is conversing with another interlocutor. In other words, "the oral language production system cannot be carried over intact into written composition; it must be reconstructed to function autonomously instead of interactively" (Bereiter and Scardamalia 1982:2).

If oral language is to form the basis and support for writing, learners should be well versed in both the conventions of oral language and written language. The communicative tasks, which entail exchange of information and negotiation of meaning can thus help in orientating the learners towards both oral and written discourse conventions and make learners know how to interact orally and to write independently. The kind of tasks that are likely to make them disengage from the 'writer-based' prose in which they seem to write for themselves rather than for others, to the 'reader-based' prose in which they take into account other people's perspectives, will reinforce their knowledge of the conventions of writing. The selection of writing activities which enable the learner to address himself to others would thus be a step in the right direction though this should not be done at the expense of depriving the learner of the opportunity to learn how to express his point of view in writing.

The question of what language features the task is expected to elicit is another issue in selecting a writing task. While it may be easy to do this in specialized forms of language learning (ESP) as in English for Business because the language lesson could be based on a topic being learnt in Business Studies, it may not be so easy to do it in general English classes where learners may not only be of different abilities but could also be from different disciplines (as in classes with both arts and science students). An attempt can nevertheless, still be made to accommodate the interests of both without jeopardizing the communicative and interactive nature of the task.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has attempted to explore the role of discourse in learning with particular focus on the role language performs through speech acts. The approach towards discourse has therefore, been functional so as to show the link between the function of discourse in oral activities and the function discourse performs in writing. Speech acts are discernible in classroom talk in both teacher-fronted tasks and student-student talk. The extent to which learners are able not only to produce language but also to employ skills in producing the language is important. Hence the way they are likely to take turns and engage in conversation could determine whether it is language that prevents them from communicating or whether it is their lack of skill in maintaining the flow of conversation. This could be reflected in the writing of compositions in which learners may not be able to show coherence in the text because of their inability to link one proposition to another.

The inability of pupils to write can also be revealed by their failure to observe the Cooperative Principle because of their inability to perceive the needs of their readers and their failure to find a shared frame of reference. This is compounded by the elementary writers' failure to take account of the perspectives of others when writing, as evidenced by their overuse of the first person pronouns (I, we) and informal language. Various tasks call for different cognitive and linguistic features not only in oral discourse but in written discourse as well. This implies the need for learners to be exposed to different types of writing tasks which are likely to tap their cognitive and linguistic resources differently and thus prepare them to encounter the different types of writing they are likely to encounter in school and after school. An understanding of the discourse features which learners should be exposed to and how these

features will help the learners to write will thus equip teachers with the knowledge that will help learners to improve in writing.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This chapter will be devoted to a description of the design of the study and how it was carried out. I will explain how the target population and the subjects who formed the sample were selected, the nature of the writing tasks that were selected, and the research instruments that were employed for the study.

#### **5.1. Population and sampling**

The target sample selected for this study were 24 (twenty four) Form 2 secondary school students of two boys' schools in the Tabora Region of the United Republic of Tanzania and four English Language teachers. The sample was deemed homogeneous and reflective of what happens in other secondary schools in Tanzania. Bailey stresses the nature of the population as determining the size of a sample and argues that a study of a "population in which there is no variability or heterogeneity" (Bailey,1982:102) may have a smaller sample for study than non-homogeneous ones. The homogeneity of the sample is indicated by the fact that the students had an average age of 16 (sixteen) and were all males; the exclusion of female students having been decided on in order to control at least some of the environmental variables that might affect the results of the study. A number of studies show an imbalance in teachers' interaction that can be attributed to gender. Morgan and Dunn (1990) and Galton, Simon and Croll (1980) show that most of the interactions teachers had with their pupils in classrooms were with boys, whereas Underwood, McCaffrey and Underwood (1990) and Marby (1985), observed differences in the behaviour of girls and boys as they solved different tasks. Underwood, McCaffrey and Underwood, for instance noted that although girls performed better than boys when working in single gender-pairs than when working individually, they did not improve their performance when in mixed gender-pairs and there was a decrease in the level of activity in response to the task of completing a story. Marby (1985) found that when both genders were given production tasks (e.g writing) discussion and problem-solving tasks, they displayed similar communication acts but there was a difference in the behaviour they exhibited. Homogeneous female groups evinced significantly less disagreement than other group compositions. Homogeneous male groups also depicted less agreement than the mixed groups but they had more

disagreement than homogeneous female groups. There was also a significant decline in tension as group composition shifted from homogeneous female to homogeneous male membership. The proportion of male and female members in a group for solving tasks is a salient factor affecting the group's communicative behaviour and leads Marby (1985:82) to conclude that

...we should expect groups homogeneously composed of men and women to manifest different interaction outcomes in comparison to each other and further, we would expect groups composed predominantly of men or women to behave differently when compared to each other or homogeneous group.

The fact that girls are given less attention than boys when teachers are interacting with learners could have an adverse effect on the performance of girls who might show little participation and even be ignored altogether. This is particularly so in classrooms where males outnumber females. The latter may feel too shy to contribute or be ignored by male students who might misconstrue the smallness of the number of female students as an indication of the females' inability to compete academically with males. The imbalance in the interactions of the teacher with her/his students may be seen as an indirect perpetuation of gender inequalities in some countries' educational system and is thus a factor to be considered when observing a classroom. In Tanzania for instance, girls constituted only 38.5 per cent of all primary school pupils selected to join Form 1 in Tanzania's public (government aided) secondary schools in 1989 (National Report of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1990), and the smallness of the number is, apparently, a matter of concern not only for policy makers but also for classroom teachers since care has to be taken to ensure that the minority group in the classroom does not feel unduly ignored or favoured.

The gender factor becomes a crucial one when considering the classroom tasks assigned to students. It is also almost universally acknowledged that most girls perform better in language skills than boys and it would appear that gender differences may be revealed when girls and boys engage in similar writing tasks, with girls presumably writing more effectively or using better style when writing stories or describing events that show feeling or emotions or even in vividly giving a description of a scene or event. This could be attributed to the reading performance of boys and girls which is later evinced in writing. Gorman et al (1981) in a study carried out in England for example, found that at the age of 15, girls show a preference for writing which is self-reflective or empathic in character, whereas boys prefer practical, informative writing and engage in a variety of genres. Girls were also found much more likely than boys to write

narratives in preference to reports or accounts of how things were. This could be, as Martin (1985) and White (1990) point out, mainly due to the fact that curriculum developers and schools tend to marginalize the girl's work by focusing on genres which are mainly fictional. In their study, for example, Gubb et al (1987) found that despite the fact that girls' performance in writing at the ages of 11,14,15 and 16 was in advance of that of boys, girls mostly restricted themselves to autobiographical and fictional narratives. Boys were, on the other hand better at semitechnical registers employed in explaining how to carry out a skilled activity, to describe how something works or to compose an argument on the basis of a strongly held opinion.

Although these studies were carried out in a different cultural environment, the situation may not be very different in a situation such as Tanzania's where gender imbalance in school enrollment would, apparently, mean that teachers in mixed schools, might tend to give writing topics that are more inclined towards the boys' interests than girls'.

The choice of a small sample from only two schools is further justified by the fact that Tanzania's secondary school selection system does, in view of the few places available for study in secondary schools, ensure that only a small number of qualified primary school leavers enter Form I. In 1989 for instance, only 6.9 per cent of all pupils in Standard Seven (final year of primary school), were selected to join Form I in public secondary schools (National Report of the United Republic of Tanzania,1990). Those selected can, therefore, be regarded as not differing much from one another, at least during the early years of secondary school. The two schools surveyed are among the oldest and famous secondary schools in Tanzania, and hence it was anticipated that the sample from these schools, however comparatively small it was, would be a fair reflection of what happens in other schools in Tanzania. In selecting a small sample I also took into account the fact that coding classroom talk and particularly transcribing it, can be a very time consuming business, as it later proved to be. I hope that in future, research on this subject will involve a longitudinal study which might cover a much larger population.

## **5.2 Subjects and design**

### **5.2.1 Subjects**

A sample of 24 students - 12 from each of the two secondary schools surveyed,constituted the observable sample. The sample was chosen by taking



an equal number of high ability, low ability and average ability students. This ability level was arrived at after a cloze test had been administered to all Form 2 students from whom the sample was drawn (see Appendix K). An initial plan to ascertain the subjects' English language level by using the scores obtained in their tests had to be abandoned because the subjects had done only one examination in secondary school as this was the first term of the academic year. The examination had been set locally by each school and was thus not uniform. I therefore administered a cloze test in order to determine the three levels or strata of high achievers and low achievers and average achievers (see Appendix K).

It was envisaged that in order to have effective group for learning, a group containing high achievers, average achievers and low achievers would be suitable because interaction is likely to be sustained when those who might not know something ask others about it or request explanations from them. In view of this, the high scorers were the first six or eight best students, depending on the number of students in the class. (The classes ranged from thirty two students to thirty six students). The middle batch of students constituted the average score group, and the last batch of students those who had done badly was that of low scorers. Since only one English teacher taught Form 2 in each school, it was decided to include in the sample the two heads of the department of English of the two schools. Although they did not actually teach in class, they participated in answering questionnaires and in interviews and were helpful in highlighting the administrative aspect of the teaching of English in their departments.

### **5.2.2 The cloze test and grouping of students**

The cloze test (see Appendix A) which formed the basis of the selection of subjects of the study was a passage that was a slightly modified version of 'Why the Fly Buzzes' a reading comprehension story in Grant and Wang'ombe's (1986) "English in Use" Book 2, currently being used as one of the Form 2 English textbooks. It was thought that since the story was in the first chapters of the book, the students would already be familiar with it and would not find the passage beyond their comprehension. The passage had fifty blank spaces to be filled in. However, the pupils were told to write down their answers on separate sheets of paper which were provided in order to make it possible to make use of the same test papers in each Form 2 class in the surveyed schools. The test was marked by the researcher who awarded one mark for

each right answer (exact word only) and led to the subdivision of the students into three groups on the basis of their performance (see Appendix B). Two pupils were randomly selected from each stratum, and hence a group of six students for each stream was formed. The pupils' performance in the proficiency (cloze) test was judged by their teachers in both schools as being very much the same as their performance in their June 1990 Terminal examinations in English, thus adding further credibility to the selection of the group.

A mixed grouping of high ability students, average ability and low ability pupils is thought conducive to triggering conversation since high ability pupils on their own -just like low ability pupils placed together- may not have much to discuss as they would seem to know all about the content to be worked on. There has to be information to be shared before effective interaction takes place. The groups were of two types: small groups ( of six students) and pairs. There were thus a six-pupil group and three groups of two (pairs) pupils who were the same ones forming the six-pupil group whenever the task demanded it. The six-pupil group may seem a rather big group and could have had its number reduced but this might not produce the kind of interaction being sought and moreover, the size of the classes would have entailed having several more audiotape recordings with all the technical difficulties they entail.

As explained above, the age variable was seen as unlikely to affect the results. The school-going age in Tanzania is around 9 years and after seven years of primary school, those who come to secondary school are within the range of 15 to 16 years. Wilkinson et al (1980) posit that age differential is likely to affect the pupils' performance in composition writing, particularly explanatory compositions and argumentative compositions. This might be due to the fact that at an early age, children are better at narrative compositions than other genres. Since attention was focussed on descriptive compositions and narrative compositions only, it was anticipated that the exclusion of other genres would help to avoid any effect related to age group differences. The rationale for choosing Form 2 pupils is that at this level, they are used to descriptive and narrative writing in guided compositions and these genres also occur in their reading, particularly extensive reading which is regarded as vital for the improvement of their English.

### 5.2.3 The tasks

Four different types of task were set to the pupils. In one they were required to produce a piece of descriptive writing following a model presented to them by the teacher. In another they were required to produce a piece of, again descriptive writing, following a 'Find the difference' pair work activity. A third required narrative writing following a picture story presentation by the teacher, and finally, again a piece of narrative but this time following a 'Complete it' groupwork activity.

In presenting the models the teachers first explained to pupils the main principle involved in writing the composition. They then led them through interpretation of the pictures which were used, outlined the main linguistic features the composition would be likely to have and provided them with cue words and phrases. The teacher then asked a few questions before handing out a model composition sheet to each pupil. These models were intended to exemplify details of what to include as points or ideas for the composition as well as the main linguistic features expected such as tenses and cue words and phrases. Later the teacher read out the model to them or nominated one of the pupils to read it out aloud to the class. After this the model was taken away and the pupils began to write a composition of a similar nature or genre.

The model for the descriptive composition was based on a large sized (A3) picture of a village scene in Africa (see Appendix C). The teacher first asked the pupils what could be seen in the picture and then presented the written model (see Appendix D). The time spent on presenting the model varied from class to class and from school to school. The teacher focussed on the rhetorical organization of the description and then highlighted such linguistic features as the additive connectives: and, also, etc...in such expressions as: It is early in the morning and the sun is high above the mountains. Since the picture focused on people and their activities, existential expressions such as: There is a woman waving to the people in the canoe, and locatives (prepositions and adverbs) such as: on the river, above the hills, to the men, near the house, were used. The concepts of time, people, their activities, location and background helped to show the appropriate rhetorical organization of the compositions which the pupils needed to follow in their written tasks. However, what I noted was that although the models were intended to serve only as a guide, none of the teachers attempted to remind their students to say more than what was written and the teachers immediately told their pupils to write compositions after the model sheet of paper had been

taken away from the pupils. There was thus a tendency for the pupils to think that they had to write their compositions using almost the same expressions as those of the model.

The large sized pictures for the narrative (See Appendix I), just like the model for the description, were displayed on the blackboard by the teacher. They were based on the story of five monkeys who mischievously took hats from an old man's basket as well as the hat he was wearing. The teacher asked pupils a few questions and then explained the steps leading to the writing of the narrative, following the sequence of events and activities shown in the six pictures. After pointing out the main features of the narrative, particularly the observable sequence of events, he explained what happened, thus making use of key sentences and phrases which were regarded as useful to the pupils in the writing of a subsequent narrative composition. The model (see Appendix J) was then circulated to the pupils and the teacher or one of the appointed pupils read out the model to the class. The teacher pointed out sentences showing what was regarded as the proper sequence of temporal events (time and tense) and lexical and syntactical cohesion. After the teacher had reviewed the model, it was expected that the pupils would be able to use tenses and temporal markers such as: then, afterwards, appropriately to relate events (time and tense) and select lexical items that tell about events, activities, etc The organization of the narrative hinged on the setting of the story, the characters in the story and how the story unfolded and ended. The development of the story was expected to include the climax of the story and the activities of the heroes and anti-heroes in the story (the monkeys and the old man).

When the teacher felt that he was satisfied that the students had understood the format and structure of the story, he collected all the models and told the students to write. As with the descriptive compositions, teachers varied as regards how much time they allocated to the writing of compositions following the reading of the model, with one of the teachers spending almost two periods on the model and allocating only ten minutes to writing. However, because all the English periods are double periods, the writing of compositions was done during the second period.

### **5.2.3.1 Writing composition tasks**

#### **5.2.3.1.1 Descriptive composition**

Two descriptive composition tasks were done. In Form 2A the pupils wrote a descriptive composition following a 'Find the Difference' pairwork activity and in Form 2B they wrote a composition which was preceded by a presentation by the regular class teacher in a manner similar to that for the model composition described above except that no written model as such was provided. The stimulus for the composition was essentially teacher talk focused on the picture(s) shown. (These will henceforth be referred to as teacher-fronted descriptive compositions and, in the case of narratives, teacher-fronted narrative compositions). Both these compositions were written on sheets of paper specially provided.

Each pupil was provided with two sheets of paper. The sheets were clipped together using a paper clip and carbon paper was placed between them so that duplicates could be produced (See Appendix N2 for a specimen). I retained the original copies for analysis while the duplicates were marked and returned to the students by their regular class teacher.

The 'Find the difference' descriptive composition task was first discussed in pairs after the teacher had spent the first few minutes of the first period reminding pupils about how a descriptive composition should be written. The pictures for this task (see Appendix G) depicted the same scene but the pupils in a pair had two parallel pictures in one of which some features present in the other were missing and vice versa. The pupils talked to one another and found out the missing items or differences. When they were satisfied they had found all the differences, they then showed each other the pictures and compared them. In so doing, they were able to come out with more differences which they added to their list. 'Find the difference' is a two-way task that encourages exchanges of information as each participant has information which must be shared in order to complete the task and hence can be regarded as contributing not only to points for writing the composition, but also to a significant number of interactions. Each of the pupils then went back to his own desk after the discussion and wrote a description of the scene by combining his ideas and those of his colleague which they had jotted down when the pictures were placed side by side before them on their desk.

It was generally anticipated that the following general features of interaction generated in the discussion prior to writing would affect the way the student went about writing his composition: general description of what the pictures looked like without identifying the picture first or even saying a little about the setting, identifying the main features of the pictures, ordering the sequence of events in the picture (after identifying the picture) e.g. It is late in the evening and the woman is cooking. The man has been fishing in a nearby river and is now returning home; thus confirming what the other says, acknowledging statements, evaluating (positively or negatively), clarifying, requesting clarification, repeating statements and agreeing eventually on the differences.

The time spent by pupils varied, with some taking a substantial amount of the first and second period whereas others spent only a few minutes in discussion and went back to their desks to read something unrelated to English (e.g. Chemistry), thus showing that they had had few interactions.

#### **5.2.3.1.2 Narrative compositions.**

There were two narrative composition tasks: the teacher-fronted narrative task and the narrative task based on group work. The latter was carried out in a group of six during the fourth period by students of Form 2A of each school and the former in the teacher-fronted lesson in Form 2B.

The teacher-fronted narrative task involved a series of events depicted on large pictures of a story involving a cyclist and the driver of a pick up (see Appendix K). After exploring the picture sequence with the pupils, the teacher pointed out the appropriate sequence of events and activities involved in the story and supplied words and expressions which were regarded by the teacher as useful to his pupils in writing a narrative composition. In Form 2A each of the six-member groups took one manilla folder in which there were six smaller envelopes. On the folder were instructions regarding the six smaller pictures (see Appendix M) which were the same as the big pictures used in the teacher-fronted narrative task. The pictures were photocopied and reduced in size so that the six small pictures, each of which was supposed to form part of the sequence of events, could be obtained and put in envelopes ready for the pupils.

Each pupil was required to take out the picture from his envelope and study it. Without showing the picture to his partners he had to explain to them what he thought was happening in the picture. His partners did the same and after the

group was satisfied that there was nothing more to add to the information given, the pupils as a group then decided what the sequence of events depicted was and then attempted to recount the story. The pictures were then placed in front of all the group members in the sequence the group thought was appropriate and the group members studied them. The group then broke up so that each pupil could go back to his own desk and write his own story. Originally it was thought that the pupils could sit close to one another and write the story when the pictures were still placed on one of the students' desks but this proved difficult because there were so many students that the desks were too close to one another to permit each to work freely. Hence each group member had to go back to his desk after the discussion and write. The pupils were permitted to go to the desk where the pictures were displayed later in order to remind themselves of the sequences they had agreed on. However, moving to and from their desks could have somewhat affected the length of their compositions since getting up to look at the pictures involved spending time on the pictures instead of writing. This might have affected the length of the compositions as well as what they were able to remember after that and the fact that all the writing had to be done in the classroom and the scripts taken away by the teacher after writing meant that they could write only a little .

It was envisaged that because the discussion prior to writing was an "open task" (Barnes and Todd, 1977) it would allow pupils to contribute their own ideas and not simply to respond to questions about the pictures as was the case in the 'Find the Difference' task preceding the descriptive composition. The teachers, fully aware that their pupils were not familiar with the writing of compositions (having admitted this to me before the administration of the tasks), infrequently went around monitoring the tasks and reminding pupils to stick to the conventions of the narrative genre, particularly while writing. It was envisaged that the task would involve pupils arguing about the logic of the sequencing of events. The pupils had to check the order of sequence and argue whether the picture in question fitted with the pattern of the story. What was important again was to write in the appropriate convention and style and thus avoid repeating what they had written in the descriptive composition, e.g. 'In this picture I can see a pick-up lorry with boxes in it ' rather than the more conventional, 'One day a man was driving a pick-up lorry in which there were boxes'. Nevertheless, it was assumed that the teacher's presentation would help the students to follow the narrative style. There was, however, very little monitoring of the tasks by the teachers. The teacher's monitoring of the discussion and the writing occurred mostly only when a pupil put up his hand and raised his problem. The assumption shared

by the teachers was that pair work and group work meant the teacher relinquished his supervisory role.

Table 5.1. Writing tasks done in each school surveyed

Class/Form	Period	Activity/Organization	Composition
11A	1	Model presentation	Description
	2	Teacher-fronted teaching	Description
	3	Model presentation	Narrative
	4	Group work	Narrative
11B	1	Model presentation	Narrative
	2	Teacher-fronted teaching	Narrative
	3	Model presentation	Description
	4	Pair work	Description

When the class was through with one of the composition tasks, it swapped the task with another. By the end of data collection, each class had written four compositions: two model based compositions (descriptive and narrative), one teacher fronted descriptive or narrative composition, one descriptive pair work composition or one narrative group work composition.

### 5.3 Instrumentation and Procedure for data collection

The following were the research instruments employed in this study and how they were used to collect the data.

#### 5.3.1 Written composition scripts

All written composition scripts, two teacher-fronted compositions (one descriptive and one narrative), and one descriptive pair work and one narrative group work composition task, written by the 24 subjects (hence a total of 96 compositions), were collected by the researcher. Both the original copies and the carbon copies were collected. However, since both the teachers and the students expressed an interest in the latter's performance, the carbon copies were retained after marking by the class English teacher and returned to students.



The marking of compositions was done by both the researcher and the English language teacher. All composition scripts were scored twice, by first impressionistically and globally awarding a score and then on the basis of a scoring guide (see Appendix O1) awarded a second; the final score was awarded after arriving at an average (see Appendix O2). Hence, the first marker read the script and impressionistically decided what mark to award to the pupil and wrote the mark on a piece of paper without informing his colleague. He then passed on the script to the second marker who also marked without informing his colleague. Before the second round of marking was done by both, a scoring guide I had prepared was issued and discussed before the marking began. Three levels for the quality of compositions were arrived at so that composition scripts could be placed on the appropriate level on the marking table. Scripts awarded 6 out of 10 (60%) up to 10 (100%) were regarded as belonging to the 'Good' level or category. Those awarded 4 out of 10 and 5 out of 10 were of 'Average' level, whereas those with scores ranging from 0 to 3 were categorized as 'Poor' compositions. The 'good' composition category - ranging from 6 to 10 marks - may appear as a rather unusually big range. The decision on this range was not without a sound reason. It was thought that none of the pupils would score 9 out of 10 marks or 10 out of 10, and the range had to be extended from 6 to 10 in order to get some pupils into the 'Good' category. The grading of compositions according to these levels was later found to be helpful in analysing the data on the basis of the high proficiency and the low proficiency pupils.

The scores awarded during the second round of marking were based on: accuracy (spelling, punctuation and grammar, tenses, fluency (content and discourse organization), sentence complexity and the use of cohesive devices, and word use and expressions appropriate to the descriptive and narrative genres. The final score was obtained by adding up the marks I had awarded and those of the English teacher and dividing them by two, so as to arrive at an average. When the first twenty compositions of the target pupils who had been attending the sessions regularly were compared by me and the regular teachers to determine whether there was some consonance in the way we had awarded the marks, a substantial inter-rater reliability agreement on the scores was observed and any difference that arose was mutually resolved.

### 5.3.2 Audiotape transcriptions

Audiotapes of all the four periods allocated for the study (out of the six English periods allocated each week for each class) were collected using two medium-sized cassette recorders fitted with microphones - one Sony Model TC 60A cassette recorder and the other a Tandberg Model TPR 1 and one small TCM 73 cassette recorder (not fitted with a microphone). During the teacher-fronted task, one of the medium-sized cassette recorders was placed in front of the teacher's table and a soft cushion was placed under the microphone so as to make it possible to hear the exchanges of the teacher and the students. When the lesson ended, I took the tapes and listened to them and transcribed them for analysis, but I also listened to them so as to get an insight into the nature of the teacher and student talk which occurred and in order to find out if there had been any impact on the writing task from the teacher's instructions.

The transcripts of the conversation preceding the other writing tasks (i.e. in the teacher-fronted tasks or pair work or group work) were transcribed. Since transcribing correctly can prove to be an arduous task, I listened to the tape first without transcribing. I then listened again and began transcribing. Small stickers with names of class, pair-members or group members were glued to the tapes in order to ascertain who was talking and thus make it easy to code the interactions. All together, 24 tapes were transcribed (see Appendix R).

In transcribing, attention was paid to such features as hesitations and pauses, for which duration in seconds was provided (see Appendix R). However, save for taking into account the tag-questions, no attention was paid to other prosodic features such as intonational contours or stress. Attention was paid to rising intonation because learners at this stage do, because of linguistic interference or lack of knowledge of subject-verb order in interrogatives, often formulate their questions in the form of statements. Stubbs (1983:228-229) points out the omission of words not clearly heard and the omission of overlaps as some of the problems facing anyone who is transcribing conversational data. Indeed, because of the closeness of desks as a result of the large size of the classes observed, some interfering noise could be heard during recording, despite the attempt to have clear recordings, and this did, though only to a small extent, affect some transcriptions. It also needs mentioning that in order to counteract any Hawthorne effect arising from the presence of the researcher,

students were trained to operate the tape recorder on their own during pair work and group work.

### **5.3.3 Questionnaires**

Student questionnaires and teacher questionnaires (see Appendix S1 and S2 and Appendix T) were administered to pupils and their English teachers respectively. Because there was only one English teacher in each school for Form 2 pupils, a head of department of each school was also included in the teacher sample in order to add his views to those of the English teacher. Moreover, as head of the department, it was assumed that he would be conversant with what happens in the various classes and would therefore, help to supplement the views of the teachers, particularly as I have already pointed out, with regard to the administrative aspect of teaching.

#### **5.3.3.1 Student questionnaires**

In order to have opinions about the process pupils went through before writing their compositions as well as opinions about the compositions they wrote, I used a 33-question five category Likert scale questionnaire (see Appendix S). All the questions were structured. The first twenty questions were about how pupils discussed their compositions before writing them and their views on the role of discussions on composition-writing. It was anticipated that these questions would elicit pupils' views about the nature of interactions prior to writing. The remaining thirteen questions were focused mainly on the types of compositions pupils wrote and how easy or difficult they thought they were as well as why they thought so. The target subjects were also required to respond to questions regarding how they employed speech acts in discussion prior to writing (e.g. clarification requests, elaboration etc...). Because I had been informed in advance that compositions were infrequently written in Form 2, I found it appropriate to administer the questionnaires after the students had completed all the composition tasks. It was expected that this would, at least, make the students aware of the differences between a descriptive composition and a narrative composition, for example, and would thus facilitate their answering of the questions.

The questionnaires were in both English and Swahili (Tanzania's national language). It was expected that the latter (see Appendix S2) would be much more easily understood by those respondents who were not confident with English. I first read out the questionnaires to the respondents in the class-room

(in the absence of members of staff) and explained in both English and Swahili what the questions meant as well as what the respondents were required to do. Each of the respondents was given both an English questionnaire and a second one which was in Swahili. It was interesting to find that all the questionnaires were filled in in English. The respondents in each school who failed to fill in the questionnaire because they were either sick or because they had been assigned duties outside the classroom, were requested to fill them in later and they were collected later by their English teachers and finally handed in to me. Hence, all the questionnaires aimed at were filled in and submitted for analysis.

### **5.3.3.2 Teacher questionnaire**

It was thought necessary to solicit teacher's opinions about what they did in composition lessons, and particularly how they interacted with their pupils before the latter wrote their compositions independently. Teachers' opinions were also sought about the type of compositions they assigned to the pupils and the problems they thought their pupils encountered while writing these compositions. A 38 question five-category Likert scale questionnaire was thus administered to the four teachers - two in each school (the regular English teachers and the English Department Heads (see Appendix T). Only the English questionnaire was administered because I regarded the teachers as competent enough in English to understand the questions.

Generally, the questions focused on the role of the teacher in the teaching of compositions and what the learners did during the pre-writing stage. The questionnaire thus had questions regarding what the teacher did to help the pupils write their compositions effectively. It also focused on whether there were any discussions conducted by the pupils prior to writing and the manner in which these discussions were conducted. Finally, the questionnaire had questions intended to elicit teachers' opinions on the types of compositions they assigned to pupils and the ease or difficulty with which the pupils performed in the different genres and the reasons that could be attributed to that ease or difficulty.

### 5.3.4 Interviews

#### 5.3.4.1 Student interviews

Twenty four student and four teacher interviews were conducted to supplement the information obtained from the questionnaires. It was felt that students particularly, would be able to provide information more freely in the interviews. The questionnaires may have constrained them in providing frank views regarding the conduct of composition lessons. Underscoring the importance of interviews, Selltiz and Jahoda (1966: 242)) observe that :

The interview is the more appropriate technique for revealing information about complex emotionally laden subjects, for probing the sentiments that may underlie an expressed opinion .

It was because of this that care was taken to ensure that the interview questions (see Appendix U) were neither closed (structured) nor open (unstructured). Pupils found it easy or comfortable to provide simple 'yes' or 'no' answers if they could not expand their answers but some managed to expand their answers if probed further by adding a few phrases or sentences to their elliptical answers. In order to ensure that pupils understood the questions, the interviews were conducted in Swahili and I wrote down the responses in English.

The student interview protocols comprised twenty questions. The questions focussed on three main areas: the pupils' views on their teachers' methods of teaching compositions, particularly, the way teachers interacted with pupils verbally and the support they gave them before pupils independently embarked on writing their compositions. The second area of the interview protocol focused on how the learners themselves interacted when they were given an opportunity to work in pairs or in groups and their opinions on whether they found pair work and group work useful. An emphasis was also placed on the interaction features (speech acts) the pupils remembered using when working in pairs or groups. The pupils were for instance asked if repetitions of lexical items they did not know, by their colleagues or the latter's explanations of points, helped those who did not understand previously, get a better understanding of how to tackle their writing tasks.

It was hoped that answers to these questions would help to throw some further light on the participation patterns employed in the classroom and whether or not these helped the pupils to do well in their compositions. The third aspect of the student interview protocol was about the type of compositions pupils wrote in

the classrooms. Although at first it did not appear clear to them what was meant by descriptive compositions, students knew about them after they had done the writing tasks with the researcher. Apart from being focused on the types of composition writing to which the respondents were usually exposed, the questions were also directed towards the ease or difficulty encountered by the respondents as they wrote compositions of these genres.

#### **5.3.4.2 Teacher interviews**

Like the student interviews, the teacher interviews were designed to supplement the information that was obtained from other research instruments. These interviews were similarly semi-structured in order to make it easy to process the responses (See Appendix V).

The interviews were conducted in English and the the responses were written by the researcher in a notebook. The questions asked were about how the teachers provided support to the students prior to the latter's writing of compositions (see Appendix V). The interview questions also focused in a manner parallel to the student interviews on how the pupils discussed their compositions and whether or not these discussions helped them write good compositions. The final part of the interview schedule consisted of questions aimed at seeking teachers' opinions about descriptive and narrative compositions, the pupils' performance in these genres and the teachers' views about their pupils' performance in these genres.

Care was taken to ensure that the responses were not so long as to make processing them difficult and that the responses did not veer from their intended goal, by occasionally prompting the respondents to focus on the specified issues, though they were given some freedom to give as much of their points of view as possible. This was made possible because of the smallness of the number of respondents and also because of the close relationship developed with the respondents in the course of the research work. Furthermore, in the course of working with the respondents, it became possible to augment the data obtained through interview protocols through informal exchanges between the researcher and the respondents.

#### **5.3.5 Observation coding scheme**

An observation coding scheme designed to observe the frequency of both teachers' and students' behaviour as they interacted during writing lessons was

used.(See Appendix P). The observation coding scheme was designed to include such main features as classroom activities notably, talking, listening, reading and writing. Each of these activities was further subdivided into discourse category acts or events, these being acts, including speech acts which help to realize the sequence of utterances and thus shape the interaction in the classroom. Utterances were thus studied according to their functions in the oral discourse prior to writing. Because the basic purpose was to look into the interactional patterns preceding writing, attention was devoted to the occurrence of these events rather than to the length of time one particular act took. The coding scheme was thus an event-sampling rather than a time-sampling schedule. However, this does not mean that no attention was given to time. Segments of the lesson were measured in units of minutes so as to ascertain how much time was devoted to part of a lesson's activity, which was itself composed of a number of discourse acts or events. This was deemed important in ascertaining the time devoted to an activity as well as the fluency of the participants, though the latter was not a major feature of the analysis.

The principal unit of the observation schedule was the stage. This is the unit of a lesson which manifests an internal, generally consistent, pattern of activity and is often marked by boundary frames, discourse categories or events (see Appendix P1). The stage was labelled in the conversational transcripts (see Appendix R) by such event terms as: "Introducing a lesson", or "Teacher reviews the previous lesson" or "Pair work" (The teacher arranges students in pairs). A stage consisted of one or more segments. If the teacher, for example, issued textbooks or introduced the lesson, that could be regarded as a stage under which were subsumed segments such as giving instructions about how the work was to be done or arranging the students in pairs ready for a discussion. The end of a segment was thus regarded as the end of a major kind of classroom activity.

The discourse category/event aspect of the observation schedule was a modification of Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) classification of acts. The Sinclair and Coulthard's analysis is based on conversational acts. However, since the aim was to categorize oral language that preceded writing according to language functions, the Sinclair-Coulthard interactional analysis was found to be insufficient because the system tends to focus mostly on the activity structures of the lesson as depicted in initiating, response and evaluation moves. The Flander's Interaction Category System was also found not to meet the objectives of the study since the system, based on the work of Flanders

(1970), has categories for teacher and pupil talk with regard to the ratio of teacher talk to pupil talk and use of language on the part of the teacher e.g asking questions, praising, accepting, criticizing etc. Other category systems of which I am aware and which employ speech functions acts are those of Halliday (1975) and Tough (1979) but these categories attempt to capture language behaviour which is germane to casual conversation, and I had to have categories which would be related to functions performed by oral language in the classroom context and which would be seen to help the writing process. The Halliday and Tough categories were, thus, more or less relevant to the study but because I had to observe the interactions that I deemed germane to writing, some modifications of various categories was required with the Sinclair-Coulthard categories coming to the fore because of their great relevance to analysing classroom talk but being modified so that the functional categories would not only show the functions of utterances in speech (speech acts) but other activities associated with acts such as reading aloud or writing silently (see Appendices P2 and P3).

Activities that lead to writing, were also conceived of. These acts were based to some extent on the coding categories adopted by Perl (1979). Perl categorizes reading, talking and writing activities and has such categories as: "talking leading to writing, talking and writing at the same time, reading the directions, writing silently, and writing aloud". The activity which had the most discourse categories or events was talking. This was expected because talking was deemed the most important stage prior to writing, and moreover, the basic purpose of the study was to look into the verbalization that took place prior to writing in both teacher-fronted lessons and in pair work and group work. Another aspect of coding was the code or language used by the teacher or pupils. The main focus was on coding Swahili, if ever it got used by either the teacher (in giving directions to pupils or drawing their attention, for example) or by pupils (if ever they failed to interact in English and used Swahili instead).

The discourse/speech acts represented the functions of meanings realized by the subjects' utterances, for example, requests for clarification in the utterance: "What do you mean?" or an acknowledgment in such an utterance as: "OK, Mmh". The coding of these communication acts which featured as interactional elements before and even during writing, was done after the audiotapes had been transcribed. When the transcripts had been clearly written out, code symbols (see Appendix Q ) for acts were written down to the left of a student's or a teacher's utterance and were thus available for frequency counts to be



made for analysis (See Appendix R). A pupil's utterance or *move* -to use Coulthard's (1977) and Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) term- could thus incorporate two or more acts depending on the meanings realized in the student's turn. These acts were then counted and finally transferred to the observation schedules (see Appendix P2 and 3) under codes/symbols . The frequency counts of these acts were written down under the codes/symbols beneath the corresponding segment . There were altogether twenty four observation coding sheets, corresponding to the number of the transcribed audio-transcripts and based on the activities done by each pair/group of each class. The teacher observation coding sheets were coded on the basis of the activities of the teacher-fronted, pair or group class the teachers had taught.

### 5.3.6 Field notes

Audiotape recordings and an observation coding scheme are unlikely to cover all events, particularly non-verbal ones, that take place in the classroom. These non-verbal events could be as crucial as verbal ones in highlighting what happens in the classroom. Such non-linguistic features as gestures or students' movements could help to explain the behaviour of students, particularly those who, lacking adequate linguistic resources with which to express themselves, resort to non-linguistic ones to put their meanings across. Gumperz (1981) argues that meanings can be conveyed through language - and hence words, which can also assume other forms such as movement or gestures, which, he goes on to state

...when interpreted by participants in relation to their background knowledge serve to channel interaction and affect opportunity and ultimately perhaps motivation to learn (p.8).

Foreign language learners who lack adequate vocabulary may find themselves motivated to learn if their gestures or other forms of interlanguage expression get accepted or approved by their interlocutors. If this approval is accompanied by the provision and clarification of lexical items for content, then motivation may well be enhanced.

While it is generally accepted that the non-linguistic behaviour of learners can be best revealed by a video-recorder, it is also equally true that a video-recorder could only obscure some of the complex activities going on in the classroom. Hence, the effectiveness of the video-recording could depend on the positioning of the camera and also what the researcher is interested in revealing. Despite the fact that using field notes tends to provide only

impressionistic accounts of non-verbal events, it can still be relied on as an observation device, though its effectiveness much depends on the extent to which the observer writes down what he thinks is relevant to his study. Corsaro (1981); Sevigny (1981) and Stubbs (1983) stress the importance of using field notes in ethnographic classroom studies and Sevigny mentions three types of field notes he used for his study: observational notes, theoretical notes and methodological notes; each type being so categorized depending on the intention for which the notes were written.

My field notes could be said to have been mainly observational, and related mainly to the teachers' and students' behaviour during prewriting, writing and postwriting stages. Thus I made such notes as: "The teacher goes round the class seeing what they write without necessarily offering advice"; "some pupils finished very early and after writing, they sat down doing nothing; "one of the pupils in this group could be seen merely copying what he had written while in a group discussion" (see Appendix W).

I had no fixed or rigid criteria for putting down on paper what I thought was significant and could not be retrieved from the audiotape, especially the activities going on as the learners were interacting in pairs or in groups. This was particularly because during teacher-fronted lessons the usual 'traditional' role of the teacher and students were adhered to and there seemed to be little to write about. The teacher initiated the topic and evaluated the pupils' responses and pupils sat quietly in their desks, unless nominated to say something. It was, therefore, only during the writing activity that anything of interest cropped up in teacher and/or learner behaviour and was recorded in the field notes. Hence I recorded the strategies the learners were using as they were writing. Although writing strategies did not form the basic part of the study, I felt that the pupils' behaviour such as writing without correcting errors, spending a lot of time thinking about what to write as well as crossing out words, might possibly have some relationship with what had transpired in pair and group discussions and also have an impact on the final written product.

Field notes have, however, their limitations as a device for recording what transpires in the classroom. One of these limitations is the amount of detail the researcher is supposed to put down in his notebook. It was not easy to record what was happening in all groups at the same time. Some of the activities that could have been of interest to the study had to be bypassed because either they could not be noticed as I was still taking down some notes about another group or because the activity I was interested in might have happened too

quickly to be noticed. Another problem I was faced with was determining what was and what was not important and worth observing. The researcher's expectations may run counter to what the learners regard as important. At times the researcher may feel that he has nothing at all worth recording and only come to realize later that it wasn't so, after turning on the tape recorder or even when marking the pupils' written scripts. In order to minimize the magnitude of this problem, I tried to record the problems encountered in the conduct of this study, particularly those regarding stationery and equipment and interruptions of lessons, but because these problems were not unique to a particular school and were beyond the ability of the schools' authorities to do anything about, I noted down only those which I thought had some relevance to the study.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has attempted to highlight the main features of the design of this study, particularly with respect to how the target subjects of the study were selected for inclusion in the sample, the writing tasks that were done and the research instruments that were employed for the collection of the data. The next chapter will now be concerned with the way the collected data was analyzed.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

#### 6.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter has concerned itself solely with the methods employed in collecting the data. Attention will now be turned to the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data and the findings emanating from this study. However, before mentioning the way the data was analysed it is worth mentioning the lexical and syntactical measures used for the analysis the written data.

The assessment of the quality of written compositions has been a matter of controversy ever since Hunt's (1965) publication of his syntactical measure of writing (T-unit analysis). Two types of analysis of written discourse are usually advocated: *analytic writing assessment* and *holistic writing assessment*. In the analytic assessment of compositions, attention is usually focused on the components of the composition particularly the content and the organization of the composition, though the marker will also assess the spelling and punctuation. In holistic scoring, the evaluation of the text is made by usually two or more markers who read the composition and evaluate its quality by making an overall assessment of its quality on the basis of the writer's awareness of topic, audience and purpose, as well as the the writer's control of syntax and the mechanics of writing (spelling and punctuation). Most of the scoring of compositions in schools can be said to have been of the analytic type - for two reasons. On the one hand little attention seems to have been paid to writing for a particular audience or purpose (see Chapter One) and, secondly, the large classes that teachers have to teach may have made it virtually impossible for teachers to come together and mark each other's pupils' compositions. The reliability of these measures have also got to be assessed before they are adopted.

The assessment of writing quality on the basis of measuring separate components - i.e. analytic writing-appears to be time consuming for teachers (Odell and Cooper 1980; Vacc 1989; Huot 1990). On the other hand, the holistic aspect of the quality of writing is seen by others as not being very reliable since different genres have different rhetorical organisation and place different writing demands on the writer (Odell and Cooper 1980). In a narrative composition, for

example, the order of sentences may follow the chronology of events in the story, whereas in expository writing, the order of sentences needs to follow the logical sequence of events if the composition is to have some coherence. This means that the use of words and syntax to encode information may also differ so as to show how the line of argument or theme is maintained appropriately in the expository writing.

It has also been argued that the assessment of writing may not be the same for writers of different abilities or grades. In other words, it is debatable whether the analysis used for the compositions of primary school pupil could be used for more mature university students even if they were writing in the same genre and on the same topic. Grobe (1981) argues that learners at an advanced level are more influenced by vocabulary diversity than by syntactical complexity and that the T-unit measure appears to be more sensitive to the writing of elementary school children where syntactical development is still occurring. Hence, it appears from Grobe's arguments that different measures of writing quality may need to be applied for writers of different ages and grades just as Odell and Cooper's (1980) argument seems to be calling for a differential assessment of writing on the basis of genre.

The publication of Halliday and Hasan's *Cohesion in English* (1976) and the fact that studies on the relationship between syntax and writing quality (Crowhurst and Piche 1979) have been so inconclusive as to fail to promote any real theoretical basis for assessing writing quality, have meant that the analysis of writing quality seems to be done on the basis of what one regards as significant for one's study. The Halliday and Hasan's model, however, remains a significant semantic and syntactic measure just as is the measure of the writer's use of words (frequency of words).

The quantitative analyses of this study can thus be seen to be an attempt to make use of Halliday and Hasan's cohesion analysis as well as a modification of Hunt's syntactical categories, particularly the analysis of clauses and subordinate clauses. I will begin the quantitative analysis by looking into how the subjects' use of words was analysed.

## 6.2 Quantitative analysis

### 6.2.1 Frequency counts of words

It is now acknowledged that what matters is not merely a succession of words that constitute some length of composition but also the types of words used. A *word* is the orthographic word as it appears uninflected in a dictionary. Nagy and Anderson (1984: 306) define a word as "a graphically distinct sequence of characters bounded right and left by a space". A *word* in this sense is then a variant entry in a dictionary and so constitutes a *word token*, which will henceforth be referred to in this chapter simply as a *token*. Tokens may have different forms but similar meanings as in the case of the inflected forms recognized, recognizing, recognizes. Since the words are formed from the base word *recognize*, they are said to be instances of the same token.

When a form has a different meaning from another, it constitutes a different *word type*. A word type is therefore, simply a word that native speakers recognize as different from others in a text and corresponds to the dictionary entry. Homographs (words with similar forms or spelling but different meanings such as the word *row* appear as two (or more) word types because they have two (or more) different meanings but the word *recognize* appears as one word type. In the *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary*, the token *bat* has two word types,

**bat** (1): a specially shaped piece of wood that is used for hitting the ball in cricket, baseball, rounders, or table-tennis

**bat** (2): a small flying animal that looks like a mouse with leathery wings and that is active at night.

In order to determine how competent the learner is in using the lexical items of the target language, there is a need to look into how competent the learner is in using a variety of words (word types). The ratio between the number of word types and the number of tokens he has in his text constitutes the learner's *word ratio*.

A composition that has a lot of repeated words would be as dull as one that has a variety of lexical items but is too short to carry much information. On the other hand, the frequency count of words may not by itself be the determining factor of a good composition as it would depend on whether the composition in question was being compared to another of the same or of a different genre. Counting

the number of tokens may tell us about the length of a composition but this may still fall short of telling us which words the writer employs effectively to tell us his message. Word frequency counts for example Johansson and Hoffland (1989) normally count the number of tokens of each type that occur in a corpus, often a very large one of several million running words but these frequencies still do not help to determine which words are the most useful or significant for any particular piece of writing. Observing this problem of the frequencies of words in a text, McCarthy (1990:80) has this to say:

Words of the same subject area are not necessarily of the same frequency and words of similar frequency come from widely different subject areas, so if we want to organize our vocabulary teaching on a subject basis, then the best we can hope for is somehow to work out intuitively or through studying a limited set of texts ...what the most frequent words are in that subject area.

For this study, tokens of each word type found in the pupils' compositions were manually tallied on an index card from which the frequency of the word type was then obtained (see Appendix X3). Abbreviations (for example e.g, etc), contractions (I'll, she'd), personal pronouns (Juma, Sarah) and Swahili words like Ujamaa in the Ujamaa village or Swahili words used because the subject did not know the equivalent word in English, were not counted nor were geographical names (Africa, Tanzania, Arusha). This was largely because it would not have been easy to find such words in the LOB Corpus (Johansson and Hoffland 1989) which I used in comparing the word frequencies the subjects had used in their compositions. As explained above, the base word constituted the word token and so the comparative/superlative adjectives like larger and largest were counted under the token large. However, adjectives like difficult, the noun difficulty, and the adverb largely, were each counted as a separate word type since such derivations often denote extra information in the sentence and the pupils' ability to use these would be an indication of their greater ability to use the target language.

#### **6.2.1.1 Word frequency analysis**

All the written compositions collected were subjected to a frequency count. As the number of subjects was relatively small, I did not resort to the use of a computer for counting, but instead counted all words manually. While counting words, I did not limit myself to content words but counted all words in the subjects' compositions. The number of times a word occurred in a composition was counted. To facilitate the counting, the teacher-fronted and the pair/group

work had their words counted together. The frequencies for both the descriptive compositions and the narrative compositions were arrived at by simply adding the frequencies of the descriptive and the narrative compositions together. Frequency ratios for descriptive compositions was obtained by dividing the number of tokens in all subjects' descriptive compositions by the number of times the word appeared in that genre, and similarly for narrative compositions. A token was regarded simply as any word occurring in a text. Hence a composition with 200 words had 200 tokens. A total frequency ratio was then obtained by adding the number of words in the descriptive compositions and the number of words in the narratives together and dividing this by the total frequency. Hence the word ratios can be summarized as having been obtained thus:

$$\text{Descriptive ratio} = \frac{\text{Total number of words in all descriptive compositions}}{\text{Frequency of the word in the descriptive genre}}$$

$$\text{Narrative ratio} = \frac{\text{Total number of words in all narrative compositions.}}{\text{Frequency of the word in the narrative genre}}$$

$$\text{Total ratio} = \frac{\text{Number of words in all descriptive and narrative compositions}}{\text{Total frequency of the word}}$$

In order to determine how frequent the word appeared in relation to its use in day-to-day English, reference was made to the LOB corpus (Johansson and Hoffland, 1989 ).

#### **6.2.1.2. The LOB Corpus (Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus)**

The LOB corpus is a follow up to Michael West's (1953) work. It is a one million-word collection of present day English texts. The decision to use the LOB corpus was made in view of the fact that the corpus on which Michael West's (1953) work was based does not include many words currently used in English; although it was not envisaged that the subjects in this study would use a great range of modern day English words peculiar to the various genres. However, what mattered was that unlike West's corpus which does not have frequency counts for some words (e.g. accelerate which was used in one or two of the compositions), the LOB corpus not only has such words but has also a distinct categorization of these words as nouns, adjectives, verbs etc. with corresponding frequency counts. Moreover, the LOB corpus spans as wide an area as possible and covers such spheres of life as religion, skills, trade and hobbies, and press reporting as well as learned scientific writings.



In order to ascertain how frequent the word used in the composition was, in relation to its frequency in day-to-day usage, a ratio called the LOB ratio was obtained by dividing one million (the Lob standard frequency count) by the LOB frequency ratio of the word. All figures in the Lob frequency and the LOB ratio were dealt with in terms of 100,000 in order to make it easy to enter the figures in a typed column and to read them easily. Hence 100,000 was equivalent to one 'm', so one million was represented as 10m , and 20,000 as 0.2m as the following example from the Word frequency list illustrates(See Table 6.1 below and Appendix X1)

Table 6.1: An example of the word frequency list used

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq	Ratio	Freq	Ratio	Freq	Ratio	Freq	Ratio
A/an	182	23	203	30	385	27	0.2m	44
About	5	833	18	772	23	449	1898	527
Above	5	5	1041	0	0	4	2067	296
Accelerate	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	5	2m
Accident	0	0	71	87	71	146	48	0.2m

The frequency count thus served to show how frequently or infrequently a word was used by subjects in comparison with its frequency of occurrence in the Lob corpus. It was conjectured that some words which were very low in the Lob frequency would probably appear in the classroom context because of the specific topics being focused on. Where there was a substantial exchange of information and hence interaction, it was assumed that those who had a good command of vocabulary would tend to facilitate the use of linguistic resources by the less able especially in group work and thus perhaps increase the frequencies of normally infrequent items.

As pointed out in Section 6.1.1.1, sheer frequency of lexis may be misleading because the task that generates interaction among subjects may bring about a substantial use of words which may not contribute propositionally to the development of the discourse. The same words could be frequently repeated without adding new information to what has been said before. It is in view of this that I decided to devise a measure of linguistic competence to evaluate the correctness or incorrectness of the words used. The measure of linguistic competence was based on how correctly or incorrectly the word was used in context. Hence I attempted to find out, for example, how appropriately the word

co-occured with other words in the sentence or paragraph. I also took into account the correct usage of tense in consonance with the genre, such as the use of the past tense for the narrative composition, as well as the appropriateness of the word in relation to other words in the previous sentence. I randomly selected a sample of 12 subjects for this analysis of linguistic competence. The selection was based on the subjects' performance in their compositions. Six high rated subjects (High Performers) and six low rated (Low Performers) were thus selected. Each of these subjects' composition had its words (tokens ) counted. I then counted the number of correctly used tokens so as to assess how accurate or inaccurate the subject's words were. I awarded one mark for a correctly used word and half a mark for an incorrectly used word. The subject's total score was obtained by adding the score of the correct words to those of the incorrect ones. The total score was then divided by the 'hypothetical' score that the subject could have obtained had he used all words in his composition correctly. A subject who got 80 words correctly used would, for instance, be awarded 80 marks. If he used 20 words wrongly he would be awarded 10 marks. his total score would thus be 90. Since he had written 100 words all together, then his score would be 90% ( i.e  $90/100 \times 100$  ).

I have pointed out in the preceding paragraph how important the use of different words is in writing. Lexical variation is a great, though by no means an entirely adequate, indication of the extent to which the subjects may have been able to make use of words in writing their compositions. This "measure of how frequently the learner makes use of one and the same word type" (Faerch, Haastrup and Phillipson, 1984:80-81) is vital since the learners were writing their compositions after verbalization which is highly susceptible to a repetition of words, especially by incompetent writers. There is a possibility too that the learners may not have remembered all that was verbalised for inclusion in their composition or may, after all, have not been confident enough to include these words because they felt that the teacher would not find them appropriate for the task. I am led to believe this because having been provided with the model and guessing that the task was going to be marked (as is always the case with their other classroom work), the subjects may have felt the need to write so that what they put down fits into the teacher's "frame of reference" (Edwards and Furlong, 1978; Michaels, 1987 and Ulichny and Watson-Gegeo, 1989) and is thus suitably awarded marks. An example of this was the use of words used by High Performers as they elaborated various points in their oral discussion but which they did not include in their compositions. Some of these words may not have been very useful in describing the pictures or in telling the story, but all the

same, they illustrate the students' potential to hypothesize, think beyond the text and incorporate into the discussion their previous experience Phillips, (1985) in their local communities or even in a Geography lesson, as this exchange shows (see Appendix R Transcript xiv).

0035S2: and there is a boy in the picture moving towards his mother

0036S1: yes- and this fish shown is [ very big ]

0036aS2: [ is very big ]

0037S1: we don't know what type of fish maybe the Nile fish called sangara" ( laughs )

0038S2: yes (they both laugh)

0039S1: sangara

0040S2: very big sangara

0041S1: very big you know look- very nice- you know those people who live nearby  
lakes most of them their main economic activity is fishing

In another transcript (Transcript xxv), the same subjects are talking about the picture of a pick-up van accident:

0219S1: and the driver of the car is explaining about what happened eh to the poli to  
the traffic police while the- police is writing- is taking some documents

0220S2: yes full statement about that accident

0221S1: aah ( he laughs ) I think it is somehow a very interesting story

0222S2: so we can add that the driver is trying to explain very very

0223S6: nicely yaah ( he laughs ) because he / apologized / to the policemen.

What is evident from the above turns is that despite their poor English, the subjects are employing some vocabulary that at their level may not be very common (documents , apologize,) or that is probably metalanguage from Geography (consider the expressions: nearby lakes , and their main economic activity is fishing). These words may be missing in the subjects composition because either they thought the teacher would regard them as outside the scope of the composition or because the subjects were not sure how these words would be accurately written. As Faerch, Haastrup and Phillipson (1984:83) assert:

learners may decide to make use of a restricted set of words in a certain communicative event either because they avoid running the risk of using 'difficult' words or because they do not experience the need to vary the vocabulary they use. This point becomes clear if one applies the type-token method to individual semantic units in a text.

The counting of word-types in both the oral transcripts and the written compositions helps to shed some light on how the presence of word types in these transcripts may have had some impact on the written compositions.

However, it has to be emphasized that since the original word frequency count was based on the written compositions, any reference made to frequencies of words in the verbal transcripts will have to be putatively made with the word-list made on the basis of the written compositions in mind. It is in view of this that a brief explanation of how the word list was compiled, might be useful.

### **6.2.1.3. Frequency counting**

#### **6.2.1.3.1 The counting of tokens**

Each word used in the composition script was written on an index card (See Appendix X2) and the frequencies of the word were tallied as described in Section 6.2.1.2 .

#### **6.2.1.3.2 Word types**

Lexical variation as a determining factor of how variable one's choice of words is, was deemed important for this study. Word type frequencies were obtained by counting the number of times each token of each type got used in the compositions (as well as in the verbal transcript data). The teacher-fronted and pair-work/group work counted as one task as regards word type frequencies. I felt that to facilitate counting, a sample of High Performers and Low Performers (chosen on the basis of their performance in compositions) needed to be identified. The presence of a word type in either the descriptive or narrative composition counted as one , irrespective of how many times tokens of the type appeared in the script. What was important for the analysis was the link between the word types and their relationship to the corpus of words in the descriptive or narrative composition. It was also deemed important to relate the words to their frequencies in the Lob corpus. Hence a subject who used the word "recognize" which has a Lob frequency count of 28 and is thus a low frequency word,would appear in that context to be using a word that is not only lexically related to events in a particular context in a particular genre but is also rather uncommon at his linguistic level. His counterpart who chooses the word "understand" with a Lob frequency of 157, would be regarded as not having the same command of vocabulary. This presupposes that the subject who used the word "recognize" also knows the word "understand".

## **6.2.2 Syntactical analysis**

### **6.2.2.1 Analysis of sentences and clauses**

Sentence length in composition has, for over two decades, been regarded by Hunt (1965) and other proponents as a measure of syntactical maturity and hence quality in composition writing. The phrase "syntactical maturity" may lend itself to different interpretations depending on the subjects to which this maturity is being attributed as well as the type of genre whose syntactical maturity is being measured. Hunt (1965) regards syntactical maturity as being determined by a main clause plus other subordinate clauses, thus constituting what Hunt called the T-unit length. Complexity is arrived at by dividing the number of all clauses by the main clause or the T-units. There are, however, a few criticisms levelled at Hunt's concept of syntactical maturity. One of them has been the extent to which this concept of complexity can be said to be reliable, since complexity or lack of it may be a question of the writer's choice of style as well as being dependent on the subject he is writing about. Predictably, a writer who writes a short narrative may have his text regarded as not being complex while the same writer may be predisposed to write complex sentences when presenting arguments in an expository composition. The mode of discourse thus affects the nature of complexity (Crowther and Piche, 1979; O'Donnell, 1976). O'Donnell (1976) argues that individuals may prefer to use certain structures more often than others, and that their styles may differ for this reason. On the other hand, others like Van Den Broeck (1977:155) argue that length alone can never measure syntactical complexity as it shows what happens but fails to reveal the source of this complexity. Van den Broeck argues that:

...length never precisely measures syntactical complexity because it cannot give an analysis of what exactly contributes to such complexity

I would argue that measuring or assessing something is one thing, and saying what brings it about is another, though the two are not mutually exclusive. It is, I hope, the work of the researcher to utilize measurements and offer explanations regarding the outcomes of those measures, since after all, the same measure adopted by two different researchers may give results which are different. In fact, Van Den Broeck eventually concedes that the T-unit analysis is an inescapably valid assessment of writing quality. What is at stake, however, is the fact that studies done on the validity of syntactical complexity appear to have been conducted mostly among university speakers of English as a first language thus making it doubtful whether syntactical complexity on that scale

is a universal phenomenon or whether socio-cultural factors may also hold sway over what is being assessed as syntactically complex. Furthermore, syntactical complexity tends to be seen in isolation from the stylistic features the writer is likely to include in his writing even punctuation marks or use of specific words to create an effect. It is in view of this that critics like Gaies (1980) who see a parallel between syntax and vocabulary, see the syntactical maturity concept as not without its weaknesses. Vocabulary may play a great part in determining the syntax of text, especially among ESL/EFL learners.

Hunt's (1965) analysis is, nevertheless, still useful because, unlike others, it is measurable. Despite this, my analysis veered a little from the 'orthodox' counting suggested by Hunt because it was deemed that the subjects of this study, all of whom were elementary learners, were unlikely to engage in complex subordination which appears to form the hub of Hunt's analysis. In my analysis I first counted all clauses that were included in each subject's composition. I then categorized them into finite clauses and non-finite clauses. It has been argued that finiteness and non-finiteness may constitute the complexity or otherwise of a text and that finiteness is a common feature of spoken English whereas non-finiteness is regarded as a feature of written English (Beaman 1984; Tannen 1982; Chafe 1982; Perera 1986 and Hammond 1990). It would, seem, therefore that high-rated compositions might tend to display the feature of non-finite clauses though this was not the case as will be illustrated by the data. The subordinate clauses were, nevertheless, taken account of on the basis of how nominal group structures were incorporated. The nominal group structures which were looked into were the determiner+noun+prepositional phrase and determiner+noun+adjectival clause of the *wh*-type (e.g. relative clause). These were looked into because it was anticipated that they could be used in the constructions of sentences relevant to the writing tasks. Apart from counting the number of clauses I also counted the number of sentences in each composition .

The number of clauses a writer has may help to throw some light on how complex the writer's thought is and how he is able to show a sequence and linking of propositions. I counted the frequency of both finite and non-finite clauses (see Table 7.20). Since the subjects under study were elementary learners of English, it was anticipated that their written compositions would reveal a substantial number of finite clauses, thus showing that they have not yet fully mastered the style of written English. On the other hand, the fact that some non-finite clauses might be found in some compositions, could reveal that

some subjects may have started getting some idea of what the conventions of writing are during their two years of secondary education.

An attempt was also made to determine how accurately or inaccurately used the subordinate clauses were. To do this, a scale of linguistic competence was devised. In devising this scale I divided up the subordinate clauses into four levels. At one level were those main clauses which had only one subordinate clause. The second level was that of two subordinate clauses. The third level was that of three subordinate clauses and the fourth level was that of four or more subordinate clauses. It is conceivable, therefore, that a subject with more clauses than another would be regarded as having more syntactical maturity in his sentences. However, what also mattered was the extent to which the clause was correctly used in the composition (see Table 7.18 )

#### **6.2.2.1.1 Existentials and Locatives**

The main focus of this study has been the anticipation that certain linguistic features are likely to be realized by the interactional features that emerge as the learners are interacting while doing communicative tasks. In discussing the "Find the difference" picture, for instance, it was conjectured that linguistic features such as locatives and existentials would emerge. This is largely because the task entails the use of such expressions as: There is/There are; He has/We have (existential expressions) as well as references to places or positions e.g. beside, near, close, in front of (prepositions and adverbs). Quirk et al (1985:1403) regard existentials as "serving to bring the existence of an entire proposition to the attention of the hearer". Existentials would thus be introduced to state what the subject sees in the picture or as an introduction intended to alert the interlocutor to what is currently being stated with such linguistic forms being expected: there + be (present or past tense); subject + auxiliary + be + subject + predicate or there + auxiliary + be + subject + predicate. The locatives are usually adjuncts relating to persons or objects mentioned or to a location or destination. These adjuncts will normally be prepositions + nouns, e.g. over, underneath, in front of, above, on top of the house, the fire, etc. or preposition adverbs such as: in front, on top, above, below, behind etc. most of which were expected to be used in both the descriptive and the narrative compositions.

The locative and existential expressions were counted for each of the composition tasks (see Table 7.14). Frequencies were tallied and the totals transferred to the table for analysis. First the number of locatives and existential expressions were determined for the whole sample for each of the written

tasks. In order to find out how those who had performed highly compared with low performers, the number and percentage of existential expressions and locative expressions was obtained for high performers and the same was done for low performers. This helped to indicate to what extent, the High Performers and Low Performers used these linguistic expressions in comparison with the use made of the linguistic expressions by the whole sample.

#### **6.2.2.1.2 Use of nominals: determiner + Noun + prepositional phrase and determiner + Noun + relative clause/wh- clause**

Although it was at first thought that the subjects would not, at their relatively low linguistic proficiency level, be able to use sophisticated structures, it was expected that they would at least incorporate into their compositions, those structures which they regarded as appropriate in describing the sequence of events in the pictures such as: The man with the fishing rod is going back home/ The man who has a fishing rod is going back home. This is the place where the man is going. Wh- clauses are regarded in this context as all sentence constructions which had the wh-form after a noun phrase, and are thus distinguished from relative clauses narrowly defined which are realized by the use of relative pronouns (who, which, whose, whom and that). Each of those types of expressions was thus counted for each composition and the number of times it was used by a pupil was recorded. In order to find out the pattern used among the subjects, a comparison was made between the High Performers and Low Performers by writing down the percentage of these linguistic features used by High Performers and Low Performers for each task in comparison with the whole sample (see Table 7.16). The same approach was adopted for the oral transcript so as to ascertain whether or not the features noted in the oral transcripts were discernible in and did affect the written compositions, though this did not constitute the basis of the analysis of the data.

### **6.2.3 Cohesion analysis**

#### **6.2.3.1 Analysis of connectives**

Halliday and Hasan (1976:227) regard connectives (conjunctions) as showing a semantic relation between ideas or propositions in sentences and, particularly "a specification of the way in which what is to follow is systematically connected to what has gone before". Hence like punctuation which shows how a new sentence or a new paragraph is related to a previous one, connectives have a vital role in showing how effectively or ineffectively a writer is organizing



his propositions, and is thus a fair reflection of the effective or ineffective association of ideas or perhaps of the mental processes that go into the writer's mind before the creation of a text. I have assumed that this role for connectives is particularly important in this study because of the interactive nature of the learner's talk leading to the verbalization of thought in a coherent manner in writing being crucially important.

The connectives had their frequencies counted and determined for each type in each subject's composition in all writing tasks (see Table 7.21). Based on the Halliday-Hasan typology, the four conjunction types dealt with were: additives such as: *and, also, or, besides, in addition to*, etc; temporal connectives such as: *then, next, at once, after that* etc; causal connectives such as: *because, so, therefore, due to* etc; and adversatives such as: *but, however, although and nevertheless*. I decided to classify each of the connectives as having been used inter-sententially or intra-sententially. This was deemed important because the writer's use of any of these connectives either in the middle of sentences or in between sentences may show whether or not the writer is able to use them effectively to achieve the desired results. It was also expected that because of the rapid flow of ideas generated in a shared context, a context mutually created by the speaker and his interlocutor, it is likely that speech leads to producing a substantial number of inter-sentential connectives, hence showing a close link between an uttered statement and a previous one, though they may not guarantee coherence. In the written mode, however, though beginning writers are likely to show some features of intra-sententiality it is likely that the number of inter-sentential expressions will be reduced because the writer has to plan what to write. In writing he may simply use simple sentences in order to be sure of being understood or to avoid the use of intra-sentential connectives lest he use them wrongly.

Segal, Duchan and Scott (1991) and Yde and Spoelders (1990) conclude in their studies on intra-sentential and inter-sentential cohesion that inter-sentential cohesion appears to be more important than intra-sentential cohesion because of the semantic relation that the latter creates across successive sentences. Although this is a fair assertion, I would regard it as obscuring the central role of intra-sentential links and the relationships among ideas exhibited when the speaker or writer wishes to show how closely connected his ideas are. These authors regard the importance of interclausal connectives as being that of showing a shift in the story when a new perspective is brought to the fore. This is usually indicated by the use of such

connectives as: *and*, *then*, *so*, *but* and *because*. Segal, Duchan and Scott (1991) thus see the interclausal connectives as being designed

to shift or indicate that the incoming information should be interpreted from the character's subjective perspective. (p.50)

Connectives lead to text interpretations because the context in which a connective has been inserted either within the sentence or between the sentences can determine the meaning created by the sentence. In the following sentences, for example, the use of the clausal conjunction *so* either intra-sententially or inter-sententially, will highlight what impact the discourse has on the meanings.

(a) He shot the hare, so he and his other brother ate it for supper.

(b) He shot the hare. So, he and his other brother ate it for supper.

While the two sentences may seem not to differ, the second sentence (bearing an intersentential conjunction) could have the discourse and stylistic function of indicating a continuity of thought and reasoning, similar to the use of *so* after a pause in conversation, whereas the first sentence may merely indicate an overlapping of events and thus show the conjunction *so* functioning like the additive *and* to merely show what followed next.

What we make out from the sentences may not be determined by the position of the word alone, but by our understanding of the entire discourse that precedes it. I would argue that beginning writers tend to display very few inter-sentential constructions because they have not mastered the mature conventions of writing (See Appendices L and N1). They would thus, tend to include a lot of intra-sentential additive markers, since these are features which, apparently, predominate in the spoken mode. However, since the learner is expected to follow 'literate' conventions if his text is to be appreciated, it becomes imperative to find out the extent to which he is able to incorporate intra-sentential and inter-sentential connectives in his composition. As Yde and Spoelders (1990) state regarding inter-sentential and intra-sentential connectives:

Cohesive ties do occur within sentences but it is those across sentence boundaries that really allow sequences of sentences to be understood as a text (p.199)

Each of the composition scripts for all the written composition tasks was read and frequencies were counted and transferred to a table in which all

connectives were classified as either of the interclausal or intraclausal category. The connectives were then added up so as to ascertain the number of inter-sentential and intra-sentential connectives used for the whole sample and by High performers and Low performers. A comparison was thus made between High performers and Low performers on the basis of their employing intra-sentential and inter-sentential connectives as well as on the basis of the teacher-fronted , pair work and groupwork nature of the task (see Table 7.23). A percentage of intra-sentential and inter-sentential connectives written by high performers and low performers was calculated in relation to the number of inter-sentential and intra-sentential connectives of the whole sample. Furthermore, the subjects were scored on the basis of how accurately or inaccurately they used the connectives. The score was obtained by awarding a full mark to the correctly used connective and half a mark to an incorrectly used connective and finally dividing the score over the total score that could have been awarded to all connectives the subject used.

In order to obtain a measure of inter-rater reliability, one of my fellow research students was requested to count the frequency of connectives in the compositions. Any disagreement in the number of connectives was discussed and resolved by mutual agreement between us.

#### **6.2.3.2 Cohesive ties**

In one of their explanations about cohesion which is, probably, the simplest in their detailed account of cohesion, Halliday and Hasan (1976:4) see cohesion simply as referring to "relations of meaning that exist within a text". It is thus a measure of assessing how the speaker's utterances and subsequently - as was the case in this study - the writer's ideas or propositions, are related to one another. There are cohesive devices (or cohesive ties) which, like the connectives, bring about this linking of propositions. These cohesive devices are the grammatical devices such as reference (with its sub-categorization of pronouns, demonstratives and comparatives), substitution and ellipsis (both occurring in nominal, verbal and clausal categories), reiteration, which involves a repetition of lexical items, use of synonyms or hyponyms, use of superordinate terms or general words; and collocation. I decided to exclude an analysis of collocation as a lexical cohesive device for two reasons. In the first place the generally short compositions which tended to have repetitive ideas or propositions made the same number of words to co-occur and this made it difficult to arrive at a fair judgment of what constituted genuine collocation. On

other hand, the writers' use of certain lexical items was basically due to the nature of the task and could not have been omitted without rendering the text less meaningful. The nature of the task favoured somewhat the use of more or less the same words or expressions, such as: There is a man; riding a bicycle; carrying boxes. The co-occurrence of these words was widespread and cannot be said to have been unique to a particular pupil. Secondly, the use of certain words by the pupils seems to have been occasioned not so much by linguistic reasons as by, probably, socio-cultural reasons. I have in mind for example, the subjects' conception of 'canoe' and 'boat' in the 'Find the difference' descriptive task. Whereas some regarded what was on the water (in the picture) as a canoe, others presented it as a boat. This could be because the two words seem to be used interchangeably sometimes, especially in rural Tanzania where boat engines are rare. Similarly, the area near the two houses in the picture was variously called 'a lake', 'a river' and 'a sea'. Stotsky (1986) argues that a word that may seem to collocate to one person may not do so to another from a different culture. I would argue that it is not only the cultural divergences that bring about a variety of interpretations but also a lack of vocabulary to express a concept which may have been another significant factor in this case. It was for these reasons that I regarded collocation as not being a reliable measure for analysing compositions of low proficiency writers as most of the subjects of this study were.

The cohesion devices used are presented below with examples of each cohesive tie (subcategory of cohesion).

Table 6.2. Types of cohesion and examples from subjects' written scripts

Type of cohesion	Cohesive item	Example from the students' written scripts
Reference pronoun	he, she, him, his	When the driver heard that <i>he</i> got off and marched forwards to the rider of the bicycle. When the driver arrived at the place where an accident happened, the policeman were also coming towards <i>them</i> . The rider of the bicycle was very sad because <i>his</i> bicycle fore tyre was bended.
demonstr.	this, that	When <i>those</i> men were talking two policemen were coming towards them
compar.	bigger, biggest, smaller, less than	There are two houses. One is <i>bigger</i> and the other is small.
Reiteration Synonym/Hyponym	man	There are two <i>people</i> coming out of the river. One <i>man</i> is in front and another is behind.
Same item	village	Near that village there is a lake. At that <i>village</i> I saw many things.
Superordinate	people	There were two men. the two <i>people</i> were going to the river.
General	things	There is a boat on the lake. There is a <i>thing</i> on the lake. saw many things
Word Substitution		
Nominal	one	There are two houses. The first <i>one</i> is bigger than the second <i>one</i> . The bigger <i>one</i> is in front of the smaller <i>one</i> .
Verbal	does	In Picture A the man is having a fishing rod and in Picture B he also <i>does</i> (have a fishing rod).
Clausal		None
Ellipsis		
Nominal	man	One man is carrying a fish and the other [man] have no fish
Verbal	got	Picture B has got a boy while picture A hasn't [got] a boy
Clausal	they saw	When they came they saw the boxes, also [they saw] the bicycle which was broke.

Each of the cohesive ties was tallied for each pupil's composition and the tallied frequencies were then added up so as to arrive at the total frequencies of each cohesive tie. A percentage of each type of cohesion in comparison with other

cohesion devices, was obtained for all the writing tasks in order to determine which cohesion device was used most and which the least (see Table 7.25). Furthermore, in order to ascertain how accurately or inaccurately these cohesive devices got used, a score similar to that explained for lexis and for connectives, was awarded for the 12 subjects who constituted a sample of High Performers and Low Performers. A percentage of each type of cohesion was calculated for the High Performers and Low Performers in order to compare the two groups' frequencies with those of the whole sample (see Table 7.26).

#### **6.2.4 Questionnaires and interviews**

The questionnaires and interviews were tallied and coded in tables (see Appendices S1, T, U and V ) in order to ascertain the responses of both students and teachers. The number of responses and percentage of each questionnaire item was calculated with the aid of a simple calculator. No attempt was made to test the statistical significance of responses by using such statistical measures as a chi square analysis or t- test because the sample was so small.

#### **6.2.5. Statistical analysis**

Various statistical measures are usually employed to describe conveniently and briefly the general features of data gathered. This is especially so with regard to variations between or among variables. Statistical tools may thus help to explain how and to what extent one variable differs from another in a large sample. As a result of the sample being so small, I felt that there was little value in employing a computer for statistical analysis. However, this study is deemed to be exploratory and hence any apparent lack of clarity in the interpretation of the data was expected to be compensated for by the qualitative analysis of the data which mainly hinged on the conversational transcripts. However, simple statistical measures were employed in order to get a general insight into the data presented. The statistical tools employed were the mean, the standard deviation, chi square and correlation coefficients, all of which were computed by using a simple calculator. The mean was, for example, used to describe the typical performance of members of each group while the standard deviation was expected to tell about the extent to which scores varied from individual to individual. I thus assumed that these simple statistical measures, together with the chi square and correlations which measure significant differences and relations between variables respectively, coupled with a qualitative account of

the conversational data, would be adequate to permit discussion of the results of the study.

### **6.3 Qualitative analysis**

#### **6.3.1 Speech/Discourse Acts' categories and conversational analysis**

The analysis of the oral transcripts was devoted mainly to those speech acts or discourse categories related to how language performs or elicits meanings in classroom discourse (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Searle, 1976). However, since not all acts may have been directly related to writing, the discourse acts were classified into two according to the role they played in discourse development and how relevant they were to the tasks. The two categories were the procedural categories and what I termed the 'content-and-form related categories'. The procedural categories were those related to the general management of the interaction such as nominating a student by the teacher or fellow student, apologizing or requesting others to do something. The content-and-form related categories were those discourse/speech acts that were deemed to contribute directly to the task-related discussion, for example: requesting clarification of content, clarifying language form or repeating a word. The categorization was done like this in view of the fact that not all speech acts would contribute substantially to the process of writing. Nominating, requesting (action) and directing, for instance, may be aimed not so much at the learner's understanding of the content or language form, as at the management or control of the interaction process. These acts do, therefore, perform a regulating function in the sense that they help to direct the flow of the conversation and keep the interaction going. However, this categorization should not be misconstrued as a marginalization of procedural acts since what happens to other discourse acts (i.e the content-and-form related acts) very much depends on the procedural acts that have helped to shape them.

The content-and-form related discourse acts were considered to be of special significance to the study since they involve acts that lead to the formulation, sustenance and elaboration of propositions. They are thus crucial to the production of certain linguistic features that were expected to arise from the interactional patterns into which those propositions would fit. Hence the content-and-form categories involved such acts as questioning, requests for clarification, clarifications, repetitions and elaborations or expansions. The speech/ discourse acts' categories, their definitions and examples taken from

some of the students' verbal transcripts are presented in the table that follows. (Full definition of categories may be found in Appendix P1)

Table 6.3. Procedural speech/discourse acts

Acts	Definition	Example from students' verbal transcripts
Framing	Utterance serving to signal the beginning or end of a topic	So I think we must write clearly these five difference
Nominating	Teacher/Student picks on a pupil to contribute to the discourse or say something	A man jumping off a bicycle what do you see more ( a rising intonation) yes eeh (rising intonation) I don't know your name - unfortunately
Directing	A verbal or non-verbal statement or interrogative that requires an interlocutor to do as told.	You are going to write what you have said - what I have taught you. Study them closely.
Requesting action	Request by which the teacher or fellow student gets the student to perform an action	policeman eeh-let us switch on to Mr.....can you tell us what is- on your picture?
Apologizing		Maybe let me interrupt you Mr... have you something to talk?
Acknowledging	Confirming having heard student's response	Yaah

Table 6.4. Content-and -form /speech/ discourse acts

Acts	Definition	Example from students' verbal transcripts
Questioning	Asking questions both high level and low level/seeking information	What is on your picture? Why is he pulling his bicycle?
Requesting information on content or form	Asking about and wishing to get knowledge about syntax or vocabulary or discourse structure/topic or content	He is standing near the way /..5../ or you can say (with a rising intonation)
Requesting clarification of form	Request for clarifying or confirming without necessarily adding new information on syntax or vocabulary	S: I see that the man who carry the fish and the man who /?/ is the son
Requesting clarification of content	Making content of subject/ topic or language form clear	T: It is evening time /? / OK this is how he has tried his level best to explain what you can see- any more else- who can tell me more than that much?
Clarifying content	Teacher or student making content of subject clear to student(s)	S1: is what you see a third man? S2: third man I can see



Acts	Definition	Example from students' verbal transcripts
Clarifying form	Making meaning of syntax or vocabulary clear	S2: woman is cooking S1: mmh S2: on on on an air S1: just on air S2: yes
Expanding	Providing more information than that available in the text / task	S1: I can see the sun S2: yes the sun (with a rising intonation) S1: the sun- the sun who is shining - but does not shining directly
Repeating	Saying same words as in previous utterance	S1: in the picture yes in the picture I can see the man who carry who carry the fish

In order to ascertain how the patterns of these acts contributed to the content and language features of both the conversation and that of the written compositions, the categories which featured prominently on the coding sheet were taken note of and the conversational exchanges in which they featured were studied. The content which was relevant to the tasks was noted and the main language forms used in the utterances were recorded. Later, I went through the written compositions to see if features noted in the verbal transcripts were observable in the written compositions and how these features were properly or improperly used to convey the information required in the genre. The sample of twelve subjects - six good performers and six poor performers selected on the basis of their performance in the written compositions was also used for the analysis of speech acts. The percentage of types of speech acts engaged in by High Performers and Low Performers was calculated on the basis of the lexical and syntactical features generated. An inter-rater reliability index in the coding of speech acts using the typed transcripts was obtained after a lecturer of the ESOL department and a fellow research student had read three transcripts (one from each task) An inter-rater reliability rate of 97.4 was obtained using the formula:

$$p = \frac{Na \times 100}{Na + Nd}$$

where p = percentage of agreement, Na = number of occasions of agreement, Nd=number of occasions of disagreement.

The reliability rate I obtained was thus based on the above formula and could be said to be an acceptable one since some researchers, including Croll (1986)

regard an agreement of 0.8 or 80 per cent as being satisfactory as regards observation of classroom behaviour.

### **6.3.2 Use of field notes**

Field notes in observation research may capture some events that could be obscured by audiotaping. The use of field notes was another method of collecting data (see Appendix W). Field notes appeared particularly useful in recording paralinguistic and non-linguistic features exemplified in a situation where video-recording could not be used. Additional information included in the field notes was thus used to highlight some of the events recorded in the conversational transcripts. (See conversational transcripts in Appendix R as well as the sample of the field notes in Appendix W.)

The results of the analysis of the data which was analysed as described in this chapter will now form the basis of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### RESULTS OF THE STUDY, DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

After presenting the ways by which the data was analyzed, I now devote this chapter to the discussion of the results and the interpretation of findings. The first part of the discussion will be devoted to a lexical analysis. I will attempt to elucidate the counting of words employed and what light this helped to throw on the use of lexical items by the subjects of this study. Since the use of different words in a text may be a measure of the learner's grasp of vocabulary, an attempt will also be made to explain the way the subjects succeeded or failed to use different lexical items. Based on examples from the natural (conversational) data, the last section of this part will be exclusively related to how the discussion that took place prior to writing, may have contributed to the units of lexis in the written compositions.. The second part of this chapter will focus on a syntactical analysis of structural segments, notably locatives and existential expressions, relative clauses and wh-clause structures and clausal subordination.. A brief review of the discourse features that contributed to the generation of the structural segments, will form the end of this part. Cohesion analysis has for over a decade attracted the attention of many researchers trying to look into the quality of written compositions. It is on this basis that I find it natural that cohesion should receive attention in the the third part of this chapter and be seen in the context of both the cohesion items (ties) generated in writing as well as how the speech acts that featured in the discussion that took place before writing, may have contributed to those features.

#### 7.1 Quantitative and qualitative analysis

##### 7.1.1 The lexical analysis of written compositions: Word frequency count and comparison of tokens used by High Performers (HPs) and Low Performers (LPs).

It has been pointed out in the previous chapter that counting words was important for two main reasons. It was important in showing the total number of words and thus the length of the compositions. On the other hand, counting the number of words involved ascertaining which word-types the subject used. This helped to reveal the different varieties of words the subjects were able to use and thus showed the extent to which they had a command of the vocabulary of

the composition genres as well as the possibility of using these words to form sentences.

In order to ascertain whether or not the length of compositions might have contributed to the subjects' performance, I counted the mean number of words used in both the descriptive and the narrative compositions. It was assumed that the comparison of results between the HPs and LPs would be representative of results of the whole sample since the subjects had been subjected to the same controlled task and instructions and had similar academic background and training. The counting of words (tokens) in the compositions revealed that there was not much difference between the tokens used by HPs and LPs particularly in the descriptive composition. This was a rather unexpected finding since it had been expected that HPs would tend to write more than LPs. The whole sample had a mean number of 173.4 tokens and 257.2 for the descriptive composition and the narrative composition respectively. When a comparison was made between the HPs and the LPs, the former were found to have a mean number of 201.3 tokens (29 per cent of the whole sample) for the descriptive while the LPs had a mean number of 183.2 (26.4 of the whole sample). It was in the narrative composition, however, where a great difference emerged between the two groups as regards the number of tokens. The HPs had a mean number of 346 (or 33.6 per cent of the whole sample) whereas the LPs had only 171.8 tokens (or 16.7 of the sample). The HPs thus appeared to have used twice as many words in the narrative as the LPs. When a chi-square analysis was applied to ascertain whether or not the difference was significant, a significant difference was obtained. ( $\chi^2 = 19.29$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

Table 7.1. Number, mean and standard deviation (SD) of tokens used by the whole sample and by high performers and low performers.

Group	Descriptive			Narrative		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Sample (N=24)	4163	173.4	82.6	6173	257.2	158.8
HPs (N=6)	1208	201.3	61.2	2076	346	135.7
LPs (N=6)	1099	183.2	89.7	1031	171.8	112.4

Table 7.2. Chi-square analysis for comparisons of compositions' tokens.

Group	Chi-square (x2)	df	Significance
HPs			
Descr.	4.36	1	Significant
Narr.	3.23	1	Not significant
LPs			
Descr.	6.72	1	Significant
Narr	4.98	1	Significant
TOTAL	19.29	1	SIGNIFICANT p <.05

The fact that the difference between the HPs and the LPs as regards the number of words in descriptive compositions was not significant, deserves some attention. One of the plausible reasons could have been that those who performed poorly in the compositions could have benefited enough from the high performers during the discussion to be able to incorporate the expressions they managed to get into their compositions. The nature of the descriptive task could also have affected the results. The descriptive tasks involved mostly stating what the subjects saw in the pictures, and it is, therefore, likely that the LPs could use more or less the same words as those of the high performers.

When attention was turned to how accurately tokens were used, it was found that the high performers had a greater percentage of correctly used words, with a score of, for example, 98.1 per cent for the highest achiever (HP) and 97.76 for a subject from the LPs group. Care must, however, be taken in interpreting these figures, since the subject who scored 98.1 per cent had far more words in his composition (107 of which were correct), as against the low-rated subject who had only 67 words of which 64 were correct. Thus although determining the accuracy or inaccuracy of tokens may be a good measure of the command the learners have over the use of those words, it still may not be a very reliable measure. This is especially so because we have instances when writers may have had only two sentences and thus comparatively produced a negligible number of words. As will be seen from Table 7.3 that follows, the HPs had more correct tokens than the LPs, particularly in the teacher-fronted descriptive task and in group work. There was only a small difference in the number of correct words between the HPs and the LPs in pair work. Apparently, this could be due to the fact that in pair work, the LPs were usually paired with the HPs and were thus able to acquire from the HPs some language resources which they might

have made use of in writing. In the teacher-fronted task the language input may have been finely tuned for the needs only of the HPs. On the other hand, we cannot escape the fact that some LPs may not have been able to pick up anything very much from their peers since there was much to discuss and the LPs may have failed to get the specific words they needed for writing.

Table 7.3. Total number of tokens, the mean number of tokens and the percentage of tokens correctly and incorrectly used.

Group	Descriptive composition						Narrative composition					
	Teach.front			Pair work			Teach.front			Group work		
	Tot.	Corr	Inc.	Tot.	Corr	Inc.	Tot.	Corr	Inc.	Tot.	Corr	Inc
HPs	548	513	35	673	608	65	912	824	88	1227	987	140
%		93.6	6.4		90.3	9.7		90.4	9.6		80.4	19.6
LPs	658	494	164	467	374	93	456	344	105	685	469	216
%		75.1	24.9		80.1	19.9		75.4	25.6		68.5	31.5

#### 7.1.1.1 Word types

The use of different words in a composition is seen as a way of effectively and, probably, briefly expressing as much information as possible. Biber (1986:394) states that "a more varied vocabulary reflects extensive use of words having very specific meanings". Being specific may, nonetheless, not necessarily mean that the learner has extensive knowledge of the words, since this could depend on what he is writing on and the constraints posed by the writing task. The nature of the task and particularly, the fact that writing took place after some discussion, may have constrained the learners to use or overuse some words. The following words were, for instance substantially used in the descriptive composition: articles (a/an, the) whose word frequency ratio was 9 and the LOB ratio was 15, the conjunctions and and the copula verb is/was.

The frequency of word type may, therefore, not necessarily be an indicator of a learner's mastery of vocabulary but could mean only that the learner felt it necessary to incorporate the word in his writing. Finn (1977) states that a word might be infrequent in use in the language but still appear in a set of themes simply because "the word is probably intimately related to the topic" (p.75). Words which are infrequent in the LOB corpus but which appeared in the

subjects' scripts were: interrupt, conversation, accelerate, pick-up, sunset, and surprise. As is shown in the table that follows, three salient features can be noted as regards word types. One of these was the fact that narrative compositions had generally a far higher number of word types than the descriptive compositions. This can only mean that there were far more repetitions of words in the descriptive compositions - a factor underscored by the substantial number of repetitions in the transcripts of the discussions - than there were in the narrative task. This could be attributed to the fact that in a descriptive composition, the subjects tended to repeatedly state what they saw in the picture and were thus likely to repeat phrases and expressions. The second salient feature of word types was that a majority of word types were action words-either verbs, adjectives or adverbs. The subjects may have avoided using nouns because by the time they are in Form 2 they may not have learnt about word-formations (the syllabus being the determining factor of which linguistic forms should be studied first) or because forming abstract concepts using nominalizations appears difficult among elementary EFL learners. In the descriptive composition, for example, only 7 subjects (29 per cent of the whole sample of 24 target subjects) used the noun "sunset" with the rest preferring to use the verb "setting" which they ostensibly found much easier.

The use of nouns (nominalization) is regarded as reflecting a mature, proficient style of writing since nouns tend to pack information together (Chafe,1982; Biber,1986; Halliday,1979; Reid,1990 and Hammond,1990). Biber (1986) advances the notion that narratives do not foster much cognitive engagement and may consist more of verbs rather than nouns and thus lack "a highly abstract nominal content and a highly learned style"(p. 395). I think that this would depend largely on how the task is set and how the class is organized to tackle the narrative task. The abstract concepts revealed in some groups' discussions bear testimony to the fact that some narrative tasks can be cognitively demanding and require substantial arguments which seem to entail the use of noun phrase structures. The third notable feature as regards word types was that the high performers varied the lexical items they used more than did the low performers. When a chi-square analysis was carried out to compare the two groups' use of different words, a statistical significance of 6.34 (df=1, at .05 level of significance) was obtained, thus indicating that the two groups differed in the amount of lexical items they used to express propositions. In order to find out if there was any difference in the way tokens and word types affected the compositions, I resorted to a statistical measure that would help to reveal this relationship. I used the Pearson correlation coefficient measure with

the help of an SPSS statistical package. However, before presenting the results of the correlation coefficient I am presenting below, (See Table 7.4) a summary of the composition scores (grades) and the mean scores (grades) for the HPs and LPs sample. (See Appendix O2 for the full details of these)

Table 7.4. Composition scores converted to percentages, mean (average) scores and SD for high performers (N=6) and low performers (N=6) across tasks.

Type of composition	High performers			Low Performers		
	Total	Mean %	SD	Total	Mean %	SD
Descriptive						
Teach.front	285	47.5	23.5	100	16.6	7.1
Pair work	290	48.3	12.2	110	18.3	15.8
Narrative						
Teach.front	370	61.6	28.8	125	20.8	5.5
Group work	380	63.6	5.5	80	13.3	14.1

Table 7.5. Chi-square analysis to show significant differences between the HPs and the LPs in the number of tokens and word types across tasks

Group	Descriptive			Narrative		
	x2	df	Sign	x2	df	Sign
HPs						
Tokens	0.26	1	Ns	19.68	1	Sign
Word Type	1.38	1	Ns	1.22	1	Ns
LPs						
Tokens	40.35	1	Ns	30.27	1	Sign
Word	2.00	1	Ns	1.74	1	Ns

Total significance

Tokens x2= 90.56 \*significant at p<.05

Type x2=6.34 \* significant at p<.05

Table 7.6. Pearson correlation coefficient showing the relationship between the number of tokens and the students' scores in compositions among High Performers and Low Performers across tasks.



Group	Descriptive composition			Narrative composition		
	Average tokens	Average score %	Corr.	Average tokens	Average score %	Corr
High Performers	201.3	47.5	0.3320	346	61.7	-0.3038
Low Performers	183.2	20	-0.0084	171.8	20	0.9434

A small positive correlation (0.3320, two-tailed significant test at .01 level) was obtained for the descriptive composition of high performers, but surprisingly, no such relationship was obtained for the narrative composition (the negative correlation was -0.3038). When the same test was applied to the composition tasks of low performers, no significant relationship was obtained (a correlation of -0.0084) with the descriptive composition. A significant relationship was, however, obtained with the narrative tasks (a correlation of 0.9434).

Table 7.7. Pearson correlation coefficient showing the relationship between word type and composition scores among High Performers and Low Performers across tasks.

Group	Descriptive composition			Narrative composition		
	Average word type	Average score	Corr.	Average word type	Average score	Corr
High Performers	71.2	47.5	-0.0920	90.8	61.7	0.0667
Low Performers	57	20	0.4302	56.5	23.3	0.3773

As regards word types, no significant relationship was obtained for the descriptive tasks of high performers (a correlation of -0.920). However, a significant relationship was obtained between word types and the scores of both high performers and low performers for the narrative tasks (a correlation of 0.6607 and 0.3773 for the high performers and low performers, respectively. What was somewhat surprising, however, was the correlation for the low performers' descriptive composition which was positive at 0.4302.

### 7.1.1.2 Type-token ratio

In order to determine the variation in the words they used, I found it important, not only to know the word types they used and hence the extent of the variety of lexical items, but also the extent to which the subjects made use of one and the same word. The latter constitutes the type-token ratio. After calculating the type-token ratios among the sample of HPs and LPs, the type-token ratios for the HPs were found to be 1:3 and 1:4 for the descriptive and narrative compositions respectively, suggesting further that the narratives had slightly more different words than the descriptive composition. The type-token ratios for the LPs compositions were 1:3 and 1:3 for the descriptive composition and narrative composition respectively, suggesting that the subjects had no difference in the number of different words as used in the descriptive and narrative compositions.

Table 7.8. Number of tokens, word types and tokens for the HPs and the LPs across tasks.

Group	Total number of tokens		Word type		Tokens per type	
	Descriptive	Narrative	Descriptive	Narrative	Descriptive	Narrative
HPs	1208	2076	427	545	2.83	3.81
LPs	1099	1031	342	339	3.21	3.04

A word of caution seems warranted in case one takes the uniformity in the type-token ratios of the groups as implying that there was no difference between them as regards the use of lexical items. The HPs had relatively longer compositions and used a comparatively greater number of lexical variations than the LPs. Hence even if they were disposed towards repeating a lot of lexical items, they cannot be said to have been less linguistically proficient than the LPs. Another factor concerns the choice of words. A low proficiency writer may choose very simple or commonly used words because he avoids using difficult ones, and hence his lexical variation can be deemed to be very low. Faerch, Haastrup and Phillipson (1984) highlight this idea with reference to use of pronouns in place of nouns. In the two samples of the writers they observed, they argue that the one who pronominalized and used pronouns all through the remainder of the text can be regarded as "operating at a minimal level of lexical variation" (p.83). The LPs used simpler words and pronominalized substantially

and the relative uniformity in the ratios of the HPs and LPs has thus got to be supplemented with other factors before the type-token ratio can be taken as an indicator of the two groups' writing quality.

Table 7.9 Salient word-types used by the sample and their frequencies and frequency ratios in comparison with the LOB frequency and the LOB ratio.

Word type	Descriptive composition			Narrative composition		
	Word freq.	Ratio 1:-	Word freq.	Ratio 1:-	Lob freq.	Lob ratio 1:-
accelerate	-	-	1	6173	5	2m
alongside	-	-	1	6173	250	4000
as usual	-	-	1	6173	118	8475
bank	5	833	-	-	69	0.1m
busy	1	4163	-	-	52	0.2m
collide	-	-	3	2058	5	2m
compound	1	4163	-	-	17	0.6
conversation	-	-	5	2067	72	0.1m
crash(verb)	-	-	7	1477	5	2m
crash(noun)	-	-	4	2584	10	1m
due to	1	4163	3	2058	222	4504
few	-	-	1	6173	571	1751
finally	1	4163	1	6173	166	6024
interrupt	-	-	1	6173	1	10m
journey	1	4163	3	2058	63	0.1m
judge	-	-	5	2067	65	0.1m
meal	4	1041	-	-	51	0.2m
moments	-	-	3	3445	36	0.3m
observe	-	-	3	2058	27	0.4m
obtain	-	-	1	6173	71	0.4m
occur	-	-	12	514	65	0.1m
pick-up(n)	-	-	37	279	1	10m
properly	-	-	1	6173	46	0.2m
punish	-	-	1	6173	3	3.3m
rays	1	4163	-	-	13	0.7m
recognize	-	-	4	1543	17	0.6m
save	1	4163	1	6173	72	0.1m
scene	-	-	3	2058	100	0.1m

Word type	Descriptive composition			Narrative composition		
	Word freq.	Ratio	Word freq.	Ratio	Lob freq.	Lob ratio 1:-
		1:-		1:-		
shortly	-	-	1	6173	84	0.1m
speedy	-	-	1	6173	None	-
sunset	7	595	-	-	6	1.6m
surprise	-	-	2	3086	9	0.1m
stick(verb)	1	4163	-	-	19	0.5m
ugly	-	-	1	6173	26	0.4m
unfortunately	-	-	3	2058	44	0.2m
whole	-	-	1	6173	435	2299
worry	-	-	2	3086	36	2778

It is evident from Table 7.9 that the narrative had far more word types than the descriptive composition. The pupils generally displayed a poor command of vocabulary. The pupils had words like: few, whole, worry, due to, finally, and as usual infrequently used appearing in the 'Low and Fairly Low frequency' category of my Frequency category (K's category), whereas in the Lob corpus, these are words of high frequency (see Table 7.10)

Table 7.10. Salient word types used by the sample across tasks and their classification into the Low frequency, Fairly low frequency and High frequency categories in both the LOB Frequency and the K's Frequency ratios.

Word	Low frequency		Fairly low frequency			High frequency		
	LOB	K	LOB	K		LOB	K	
		Des	Narr.	Des.	Narr.		Des.	Narr.
interrupt	+		+					
pickup	+						+	
accelerate	+		+					
punish	+					+		
collide	+					+		
crash (vb)	+						+	
sunset	+						+	
crash (N)	+		+					
rays	+	+						

Word	Low frequency		Fairly low frequency				High frequency		
	LOB	K	Des.	Narr.	LOB	K	Des.	Narr.	K
save	+	+							
stick	+	+							
recognize	+								+
alongside	+			+					
conversation	+			+					
compound	+	+							
observe					+				+
obtain					+				+
moments					+				+
busy		+			+				
unfortunate					+				+
bank					+				+
journey		+			+				+
judge					+				+
meal					+				+
occur					+				+
save				+	+				
shortly				+	+				
surprise					+				+
properly				+	+				
ugly				+	+				
few				+					+
whole						+			+
worry				+					+
due to		+							+
finally		+							+
as usual				+					+

When the Fairly Low frequency category is examined, it is interesting to find that words which are of low frequency in the LOB corpus such as meal, moments, surprise, unfortunately, judge, conversation, observe, also appear in the subjects' data. It can be inferred from these results that not only had the

narrative more word types but also afforded the students more opportunity to use rare words than the descriptive composition did. The nature of the group work task in which six members of the group had to arrange a sequence of pictures and say what was happening may have helped to equip members with a greater variety of words than those appearing in the descriptive composition.

The use of some word-types deserve some comment. The words bank and sunset which appear as low frequency words in the LOB corpus, appear in my data (K's frequency) to be of high frequency. This does not in any way indicate that the subjects knew these words before or had been using them frequently. These words were used frequently by one of the teachers in presenting the model composition and were, therefore, easily used by the subjects.

#### 7.1.1.3 Accuracy of tokens as a measure of lexical competence

The quantity of tokens or even word types may not tell us much about the competence of the learner in using words unless we know how accurately or inaccurately these words are used. It was on this basis that I counted the number of tokens that were correctly and incorrectly used by the high performers and low performers.

Table 7.11. Total number of words correctly and incorrectly used by high performers and low performers

Group/ Subject	Descriptive composition						Narrative composition					
	Teach. front			Pair work			Teach. front			Group work		
	Tok.	C	I	Tok.	C	I	Tok.	C	I	Tok.	C	I
HPs												
1.	107	103	4	133	123	10	128	114	14	191	166	25
2.	154	141	13	127	107	20	254	224	30	242	212	30
3.	-	-	-	140	118	22	-	-	-	186	149	37
4.	108	99	9	67	64	3	177	164	13	134	123	11
5.	72	67	5	72	67	5	190	171	19	298	173	25

Group/ Subject	Descriptive composition						Narrative composition					
	Teach. front			Pair work			Teach. front			Group work		
	Tok.	C	I	Tok.	C	I	Tok.	C	I	Tok.	C	I
LPs												
1.	92	62	30	84	78	6	103	72	31	130	90	40
2.	171	140	31	138	124	14	144	119	25	140	114	26
3.	114	88	26	140	99	41	103	75	21	-	-	-
4.	83	65	18	-	-	-	106	78	28	125	88	37
5.	120	92	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	99	51
6.	78	47	31	105	73	32	-	-	-	140	78	62

As can be seen from the above table, although the number of correct or incorrect tokens depended on how long or short the composition was, the LPs had generally more incorrect words than the HPs. Though in both the HP and the LP groups, incorrect words tended to increase as the task shifted from descriptive to narrative, what was evident was that there were many more incorrect words in the LPs narrative compositions than in their descriptive ones. This could be due to the fact that as there was much interaction in the preceding narrative tasks, the LPs may have incorporated words that cropped up in the narrative task discussions. However, due to constraints on memory as well as linguistic difficulty of encoding the words, the subjects wrote them wrongly. Another possibility is that these words may have simply been thought up by the LPs themselves and just got wrongly used. When the composition scripts of low performers are examined, it is found that the distribution of incorrect words tended to assume certain patterns which seemed to differ according to genre. In all compositions, there were cases where words did not seem to have any relationship with previous ones and even failed to make the text coherent, as is the case with this paragraph taken from one of the LPs compositions. (Composition No. 21)

The all of picture is the only one house one tree the sun and one man and one man this man I come from to terk the fish and another woman I am a woman this I am cooking some food. This house I'am will come the river before of this areas of the house and this tree will be the write of the house and this house mast be the two window and one door.

Three factors are worth commenting on as regards words or constructions that get used with deictics:

(a) The use of the presupposed definite article in a nominal construction The all of picture as a reference maintaining device when the referent has not at all been mentioned, or does not appear in the preceding clause, is reflective of the 'shared knowledge' which the writer assumes he shares with the reader. This is also reflected in the use of the deictic *this* which is used similarly because the writer imagines that he is writing on a subject about which the teacher and his fellow pupils are very much aware as in one of the subjects' compositions (Composition No. 66).

...this man I'am come from to terk the fish and another woman this woman this I'am cooking some food. This house I'am will come the river before this areas of the house and this tree will be the write of this house and this

(b) The use of deictics for assumed reason (presumption) as in the above example.

(c) The use of nominals, most of them repeated without any link function as in this example:

another woman this woman ... this house I'am will come before this area of the house and this tree will be the write of this house and this house...

(d) Lack of or inappropriate collocational link between one word and another as shown in this composition (Composition No. 47)

One day there was a car driven on the road. In that car at the back there was four boxes packed and at the behind of the car, there was a man riding a bicycle. So when the driver accelerate the motion, the boxes falling down and when falling down on the man's bicycle the bicycle was damaged and the driver were not realize that the boxes are falling down. So when he recognize that the boxes are falling down he stood his car and turn back to see. a t the side of the road there was a man stood at the house. when the driver rich at that place he saw the man puling up his bicycle he talk to him some words after a short time the police come at that accident they took a statements to a man's damaged bicycle.

(e) The use of words with wrong spellings arising from the learner's inability to distinguish the sounds (e.g minimal pairs) (Composition No. 2).

The woman is sitting on a small chair near the fire and the pot and she is stearing



[stirring] the pot. Near the woman there is a big tree - and near the tree there is a big tree. Behind that big house there is a small house. Outside of the two houses there are grasses growing around the two houses. there is a rod [road] which comes from the door of the big house-of the shed [edge] of the river

(f) The lack of semantic relation between sentences brought about by the use of propositions which seem to have been inserted meaninglessly, e.g. "I am a woman", -in the example before (a)-coupled with improper punctuation, makes the paragraph difficult to read. What is also worth noting is that whereas the LPs had common words, the HPs had rare words (word-types), as is evidenced in these two sentences taken from two HPs scripts.

- A Due to the accident the front ring [ wheel] of the bicycle bent
- B a) When the boxes fall over the tire and because they were heavy, they made a tire to fold.
- b) When the man who was driving a car recognizing that the boxes were fallen, he stopped the car and get out of it]

Student B reveals again, his knowledge of a range of words despite his spelling them wrongly (see Composition No.2 above). (I have inserted the correct spellings in brackets).

The woman is sitting on a small chair near the fire and the pot and she is steering (stirring) in the pot. There is a rod (road) which comes from the door of the big house up to the shed (edge) of the river.

What can be generally concluded here is the fact that unlike the LPs who used common words, the HPs can be regarded as risk takers since they employ words boldly, irrespective of their poor spelling or wrong context of use. Student A writes: "the shed of the river " though most probably he meant "the edge of the river". He shows similar boldness when he uses the word "steering", apparently meaning "stirring" rather than settle for any paraphrasing which might render his text less meaningful.

Ascertaining the accuracy or inaccuracy of tokens has, however, its pitfalls. While the comparison between two samples or groups may tell us who uses the words more correctly, it doesn't tell us what contributes to their using those words that way. Moreover, making this comparison, though presumably a reliable measure of ascertaining the correctness or incorrectness of words employed, obscures the fact that these compositions may have varied in length. The longer the composition is, the greater is the possibility of making errors, though this does not mean that high performers made errors in all cases

because they had used many words. The relationship between the number of words and the quality of a composition may, therefore, not be an easy one to discern and recourse may have to be had to other factors. It was on this basis that I found it pertinent to have an insight into the transcript data and find out which features - if any - of the students' verbalization, may have had an impact on the words generated. I thus now turn my attention to the discourse/speech acts employed in the verbal data to see to what extent they may have had an impact on the tokens that appeared in the compositions.

### **7.1.2 Speech acts and the generation of words in compositions**

Despite their crucial role in interaction, not all speech acts can be said to have been instrumental in the generation of words used in the compositions. There were speech acts which were supportive in problem solving during the discussions, though it was not easy to specifically relate an utterance to the production of specific words. Among the acts that were discernible and did help towards learners' engagement in the tasks and eventual production of linguistic features were: repetitions, clarification of content and repetitions with a little expanding or elaborating. In view of the significance of speech acts in generating language features in the discussions which may have aided writing, I deem it important that an insight be had of the patterns of interaction in teacher-student interactions and student-student interactions. I will first begin with the patterns of interactions that took place in teacher -student interactions by examining the categories of speech acts in the teacher talk. I will then show the categories of speech acts in student talk during the teacher-fronted descriptive composition discussion and during the narrative composition discussion. Student-student interaction will then be ascertained by comparing the categories of speech acts engaged in by High Performers and Low Performers so as to see whether the difference in the contributions of the two groups during student-student interaction may serve to cast any light on the students' subsequent performance in writing.

### 7.1.2.1 Teacher-student interactions

The frequencies of occurrence of the various speech acts in the pupils' interactions before they wrote their compositions were counted once the coding of those acts had been completed. (See Appendix R and Section 6.3.1 above) . The following discussion is based on those counts.

Table 7.12. Frequency of speech acts/function types as a percentage of all speech acts/functions for Teachers and High Performers and Low Performers combined in Teacher-fronted descriptive and narrative compositions tasks.

Code	Speech act/Function	Descriptive composition		Narrative composition	
		Teachers Freq. %	Students Freq. %	Teachers Freq. %	Students Freq. %
GIC	Giving inform.on content	14.5	70.1	20.3	64.0
GIF	Giving inform.on form	3.9	9.2	2.3	1.3
EV	Evaluating	5.6	3.4	12.5	10.6
ACK	Acknowledging	2.8	3.4	0.0	1.3
SP	Speculating	3.4	1.1	0.8	4.0
RS	Reasoning	0.5	1.1	4.7	0.0
PR	Predicting	2.8	0.0	3.9	0.0
QHL	High level questioning	3.9	0.0	7.8	0.0
QLL	Low level questioning	20.1	0.0	18.7	0.0
RCC	Requesting clarif.on content	4.5	0.0	2.3	0.0
RCF	Requesting clarif. on form	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
REV	Requesting evaluation	3.4	0.0	3.1	0.0
REX	Requesting elaboration	3.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
RPW	Repeating word(s)	12.8	2.3	16.4	13.3
RPGIC	Repeating explanation of cont.	14.5	4.6	7.0	5.3
RPGIF	Repeating explanation of form	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
EXP	Expanding or elaborating	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0
CC	Clarifying content	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.0
CF	Clarifying language form	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0

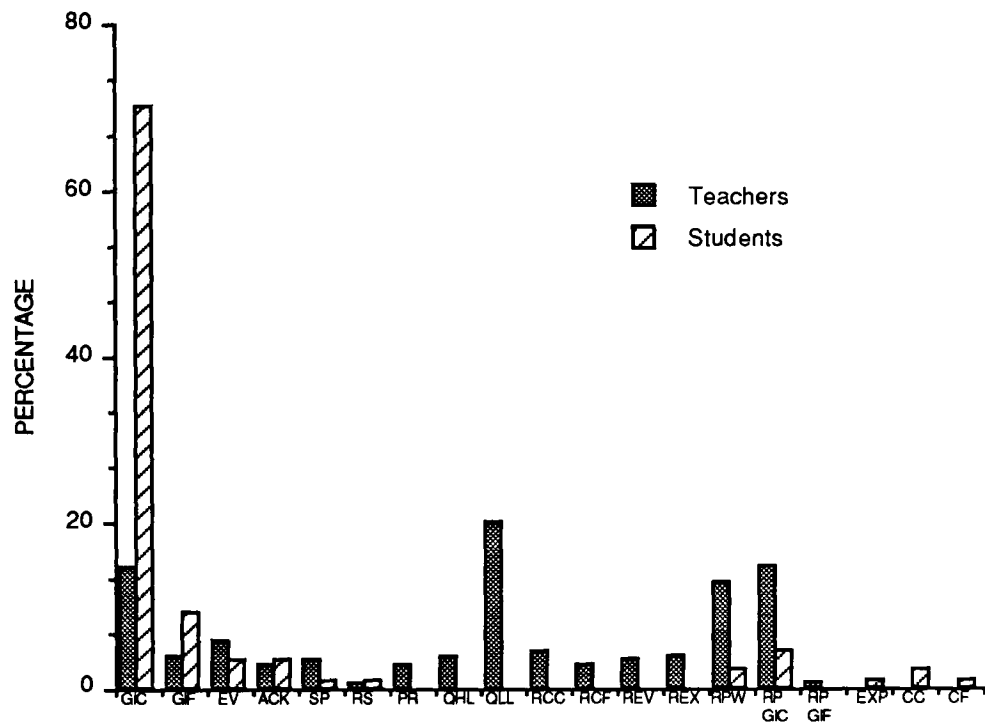


Figure 7.1: Frequency of speech acts of the language of the teachers and students in teacher-fronted descriptive composition tasks

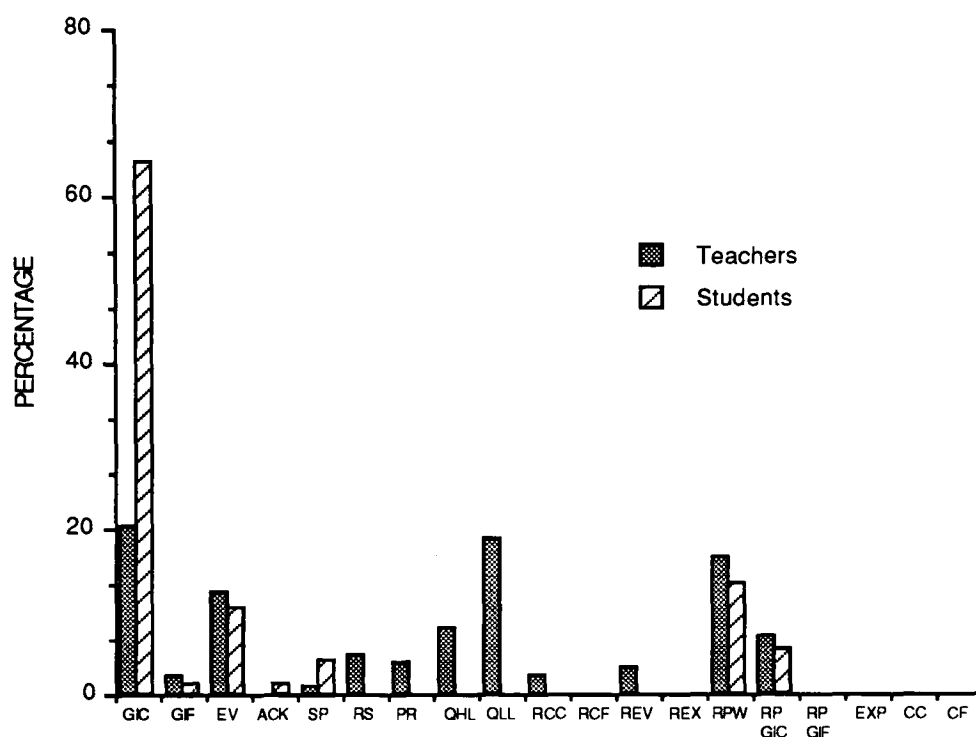


Figure 7.2: Frequency of speech acts of the language of the teachers and students in teacher-fronted narrative composition tasks

### Key

GIC	Giving information on content/Replying
GIF	Giving information on form (i.e. on vocabulary or syntax)
EV	Evaluating
ACK	Acknowledging
SP	Speculating
RS	Reasoning
PR	Predicting
QHL	High level question
QLL	Low level question
RCC	Requesting clarification of content
RCF	Requesting clarification of form (i.e. vocabulary or syntax)
REV	Requesting evaluation
REX	Requesting expansion or elaboration
RPW	Repeating word(s) or utterances
RPGIC	Repeating giving information/explaining
RPGIF	Repeating giving information on form (i.e. on vocabulary or syntax)
EXP	Expanding or elaborating content or form
CC	Clarifying content of subject or topic
CF	Clarifying form (i.e. vocabulary or syntax)
CPL	Completing

Teacher-student interaction was characterized predominantly by the teacher asking questions or explaining and the students replying. The students hardly asked any question in both tasks. Most of the teachers' questions were low level

questions which constituted almost one tenth of all speech acts compared to high level questions which were inordinately few. Explaining language forms (vocabulary or syntax) assumed a low profile in both the descriptive composition and the narrative task. Though clarification acts are important in making the learner understand both the content and the language of the task, it is worth noting that no clarification of content or form was ever made although the teachers did ask students to clarify the content or words the teachers had used. In most cases teachers' requests to students to clarify content or language form involved students merely completing a word or completing a teacher's utterance, thus restating what the teacher thought should be the right word or right answer as depicted in this transcript (See Appendix R, Transcript ii).

0033T: /..7../ What can you see in the picture? Find I mean following the example of the first picture /..7..7

0034S8: In the first picture I see that - the man who carry the fish and the man who /?/ is the son

0035T: is (with a rising intonation)

0036Ss (all students) a sun

0037T: the sun

0038S8: the sun /?/ - the sun who is shining - but does not shining directly directly /..5../

0039T: it is evening time OK this is how he has tried his level best to explain what you can see - anyone else who can - who can tell me more than that much?

In this exchange, the student in turn 0034 seems to be talking - albeit unclearly - about the man with his son but the teacher intervenes in the following turn (turn 0035) and requests the student to clarify what he means. The student (S3) shifts from mentioning about the son of the man in the picture and instead mentions about the sun in the sky. Whether this arises from confusing the word "sun" with "son" is unclear, but perhaps it might be due to the fact that the teacher's intervention may have derailed the student from his train of thought and suddenly made him utter another word which he thinks is what the teacher really requires. In this context, the student interprets the teacher's "is" (uttered in a rising intonation) not only as a request for the student to clarify what he has said in the previous turn (0034), but as a disapproval of the student's answer, and thinks that the teacher was correcting him, apparently, for making a wrong (phonemic) sound. It is unfortunate that the teacher does not take the trouble to clarify about the man who is carrying the fish and instead evaluates the student's response on the sun.

Repetitions were made by the teachers frequently. These were either repetitions of previous questions or repetitions of previous turns. The students' replies to the teachers' questions appear overwhelming, their replies forming more than half the total number of speech acts engaged in in both the descriptive task and the narrative task. The students also repeated words that the teacher had uttered but these were more often grammatical terms or meanings of words as this transcript reveals (See Appendix R, Transcript i).

- 0057T: It is near the two houses. Where is this man standing? Where is this man standing yes (with a rising intonation)
- 0058S4: /..5../ He is standing near the way
- 0059T: He is standing near the way /..5../ or you can say (with a rising intonation)
- 0060S4: He is standing near the river.
- 0061T: He is standing near the river- what we call a place which is near the river -yes (with a rising intonation)
- 0062S14: a bank
- 0063T: Make a full statement
- 0064S14: It is called a bank
- 0065ST: so he is standing in the bank of the river (he stresses the last word) of the (.....) isn't it?
- 0066Ss (All students) yes

Again in other turns the teacher requires the pupils to tell about the story but much of the time is spent on drilling them on tenses:

- 0092T: The door is between the two windows (he writes this on the blackboard)- the door is between the two windows - now you have seen that when you said that the two are paddling the two people are paddling what tense did you use when you say that the two people are paddling what tense did you use yes (with a rising intonation)
- 0093S2: present tense
- 0094T: present continuous tense (he writes this on the blackboard )- when you say that it is shining what tense (with a rising intonation)
- 0095S4: present continuous tense
- 0096T: present continuous tense - OK- and when you say the sun was shining what is that?
- 0097Su: present continuous tense
- 0098T: the sun was shining
- 0099St: past tense

The lesson did not end without the teacher saying anything other than asking about tenses and prepositions; thus showing that the teacher's insistence on form somewhat restricted the students' understanding of what the story was about, though the teacher may have thought that explaining the language forms would help the students to write good compositions. This also explains why clarification of content and clarification of form among students assumed a very low proportion of their speech acts. Students' clarification of content constituted 2.3 per cent and 0.0 per cent of all speech acts of High Performers and Low Performers in the descriptive composition task and the narrative composition task respectively (see Table 7.12).

Teacher-student interactions could therefore, be summed up as follows

- (a) Explaining or giving information on content was predominant and seems to have taken precedence over explaining the meanings of words. The fact that there was a higher percentage of speech acts related to Giving Information on content among students than among the teachers, shows that teachers spent most of the time asking questions for which they expected responses
- (b) In the descriptive task, the teachers offered fewer explanations on vocabulary than they did on narratives. Very little opportunity was given to the students to give reasons, particularly in the narrative compositions in which only the teacher gave reasons and predictions. Students were hardly allowed to ask questions and it was only the teacher who requested clarifications of content
- (c) The students were much more involved in repeating what the teacher had said and in clarifying or elaborating on what he had said than on what other students had said.

I will now turn my attention to student-student discourse to find out if student-student interactions did, in anyway contribute to the language forms which were discernible in the written compositions. I will start with some speech acts which were significant in the oral tasks and later discuss how these interaction patterns were related to the lexical and syntactical features that formed the basis of the linguistic analysis of the compositions.

### 7.1.2.2 Student-Student interactions

Table 7.13. Frequency of speech acts/functions among High Performers (N=6) and Low Performers (N=6) in pair work oral descriptive tasks and group work oral narrative tasks.

	Descriptive composition	Narrative composition
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Code	Speech act/Function	HPs. %	LPs. %	HPs. %	LPs. %
GIC	Giving inform.on content	13.9	15.6	14.5	10.1
GIF	Giving inform.on form	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0
ACK	Acknowledging	6.0	3.2	4.4	6.0
EV	Evaluating	8.1	7.2	7.4	4.9
QHL	High level questioning	3.4	1.4	1.1	0.3
QLL	Low level questioning	3.1	5.2	5.5	3.8
REV	Requesting evaluation	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.0
RCC	Requesting clarif. of content	3.4	0.8	6.8	1.1
REX	Requesting expansion/elaboration	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.0
CC	Clarifying content (topic etc.)	0.5	0.8	0.5	0.3
CF	Clarifying language form	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
RS	Reasoning	1.2	0.0	1.6	1.1
SP	Speculating	2.3	1.4	7.1	2.2
PR	Predicting	0.8	0.0	0.3	0.0
RPW	Repeating word(s)	6.9	2.6	4.9	1.9
RPGIC	Repeating explanation of cont.	5.5	0.6	3.8	2.5
RPGIF	Repeating explanation of form	0.0	0.8	0.3	0.0

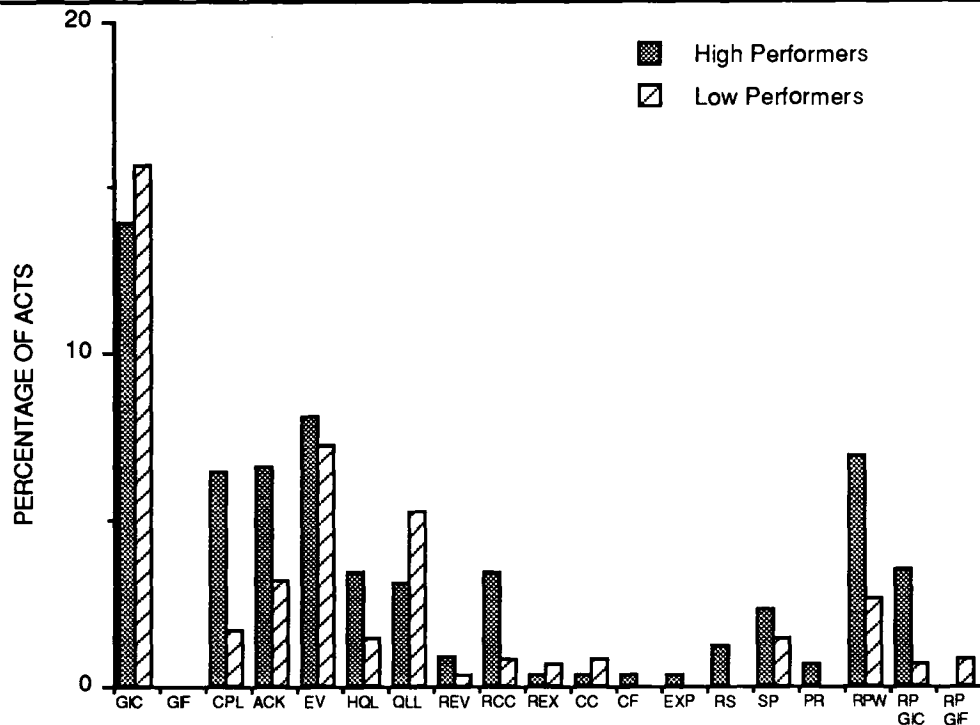


Figure 7.3: A comparison of the speech act categories engaged in by high performers and low performers in pair work descriptive composition task discussions

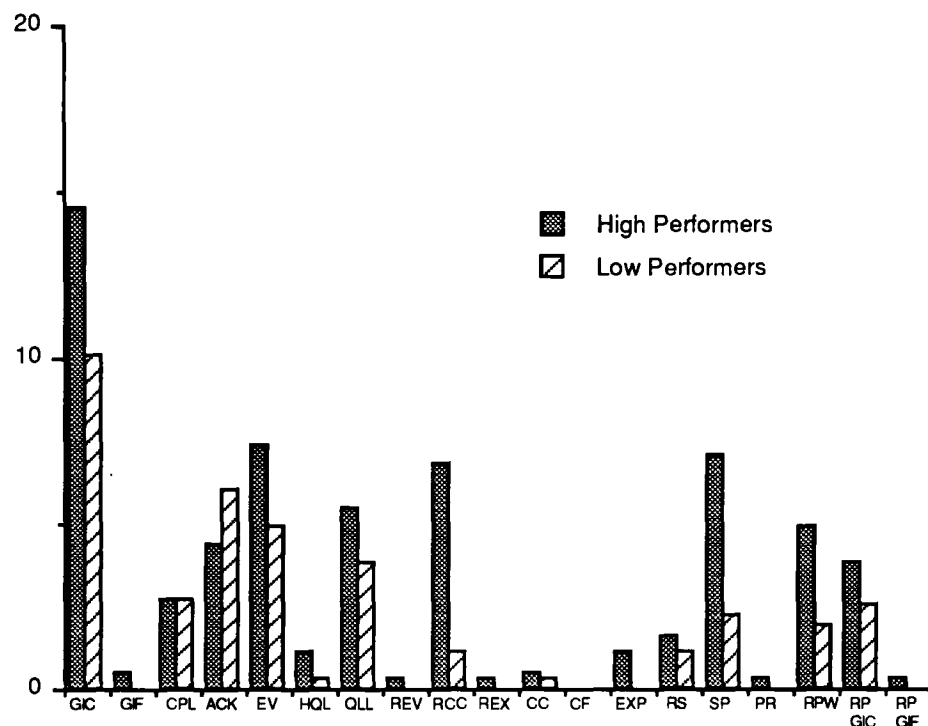


Figure 7.4: Percentage of speech acts engaged in by high performers and low performers in group work narrative composition discussions

The interaction patterns evinced in oral pair work and oral group composition tasks, illustrate the stark difference there was between the students' generation of interactions when they were in teacher led classes and when they were discussing on their own. The interaction patterns reveal more reasoning, speculating, acknowledging and evaluating by the students in pair work and group work discussions than when they are in teacher led lessons. However, the data shows that the students failed to offer more clarifications or elaborations than those offered in teacher led classes. This could be because the nature of the descriptive task for example, did not entail their offering more clarifications than those already offered by the teachers in teacher-led model composition classes or this could simply mean that the subjects did not effectively utilize those discourse functions that would contribute to logical arguments and organization of thought. The problem of failing to express themselves in English appears to have been the predominant factor.

The students utilized some discourse acts which only prompted them to maintain the flow of the discussion while they failed to engage in those discourse acts such as clarifications and reasoning, which were important

particularly in the narrative task which entailed organizing a sequence of events and offering a logical explanation of the sequences. The most frequent speech acts in the descriptive composition oral task and the narrative oral composition task were those relating to the giving of information or giving explanations. The HPs had 13.9 per cent of all speech acts devoted to explanations or giving information while the LPs had a slightly higher number (15.6 per cent ) in the descriptive task (see Table 7.13 and Figs.3 and 4 above). In the narrative oral task, the HPs had 14.5 of their speech functions related to explanations while the LPs had 10.1 per cent.

Judging from the data on the oral discussions presented, it would seem that the students may have been unable to provide each other with adequate vocabulary in descriptive pair work and in narrative group work. This is evidenced by the lack of speech functions related to giving information on language form. Another factor could be that the subjects may have been too preoccupied with the content of the task to spend enough time explaining to each other words they should use to explain what they saw in the pictures. This may have been compounded by the fact that they did not have enough time to go on with their discussions as they were required to go back to their desks and write what they had been discussing.

It is clear, however that there was a difference both in the quantity of the interaction as well as the type of interaction patterns between the HPs and the LPs though the difference was not substantial. The HPs for instance, requested more clarification of content than their LPs counterparts (see Table 7.13 and Figs.3 and 4 above) and their oral language manifests more reasoning, speculating and predicting. Only the HPs were able to offer elaborations of points in both the descriptive and the narrative oral tasks (though these were virtually negligible, constituting only 0.5 per cent and 1.1 per cent of all speech acts in the descriptive oral task and the narrative oral task respectively). As regards the oral composition task in which the subjects participated before writing, the data reveals that the narrative oral task did not seem to differ much from the descriptive oral task as regards explanations or replies to questions, evaluations and high level questions. It is, however, as regards requests for clarification of content, repetition of words, reasoning, speculating and predicting that we see the narrative task differing in the quantity of these speech functions as these are employed more in the narrative oral composition task than in the descriptive oral task. It is also interesting to note that these speech functions are employed almost exclusively by the HPs. It is thus evident that the

HPs employed patterns of interaction that were likely to lead to good quality compositions much more than the LPs. The narrative oral task was also, though to a relatively small extent, much better disposed than the descriptive oral composition task to generating those patterns of interaction that might lead to elaboration of points, expansion of ideas and logical arguments. Whether this was actually achieved or not, will be deliberated on in the following section where I attempt to show by examples from the conversational data, which speech functions were salient in contributing to the production of language forms that were noted in the written compositions.

#### **7.1.2.2.1 Repetitions**

Repetitions were used for questioning, agreeing, confirming, checking or verifying statements made by the more able students in order to help their interlocutors to sustain the conversation. This often happened after a subject had corrected the previous interlocutor's error or had simply repeated the interlocutor's word with a view to confirming its correctness or otherwise. It seems to have been used also as a strategy to seek permission from an interlocutor before the latter's error was corrected. The correction of a word or providing an interlocutor with a new word to use, was a collaborative act which led to weaker subjects learning from their more proficient counterparts. This was done by either deleting a word used in the previous utterance or adding a new word before the existing one or by providing an entirely new word. Ochs (1979) calls this "vertical structuring" and Ellis (1984b:14) offers this teacher-pupil exchange as an example of vertical structuring.

(Teacher and pupil are looking at and talking about pictures)

Teacher: Take a look at the next picture

Pupil: Box

Teacher: A box, yes

Pupil: A box banana

Ellis (1984) regards it as an example of collaboration between the teacher and the pupil, although this collaboration could also be a child-child collaboration, and regards it as a strategy of simplification leading to the omission of the preposition "of". When the pupil has said "box" (thus using a noun), the teacher expands it into a determiner+noun after confirming but later the pupil himself further expands the utterance into a determiner + noun + noun. The subjects in the present study used more or less similar structures when correcting themselves and when providing themselves with new words as illustrated in the following transcript (See Appendix R, Transcript xiv).

009S1: Let us compare two pictures in on your eeh the sun is not shine eeh the sun  
is not shine eh the sun is not shine eh, the sun is not shine eh

0010S2: the sun is not shining

0011S1: [and]

0011aS2 [also] this man is carrying a stick instead of fish

0012S1: is just carrying a stick instead of [fish] eh (with a rising intonation)

0012aS2: [a fish] and there is another man running towards this woman

In turn 0009, S1 who happens to be a High Performer, begins by talking about the sun which is shining. However, he has the verb "shine" in the wrong form and is immediately corrected by S2 who puts the verb into its correct progressive tense form. Before S1 corrects S2 the latter says:

0011aS2:[also] this man is carrying a stick instead of fish  
and is immediately reminded of his wrong omission of an indefinite article by S1 in the next turn:

0012S1: is just carrying a stick instead of [a fish] eeh (with a rising intonation)

We see the same trend in a narrative task discussion where a comparatively more proficient interlocutor - S3 -, repeats his counterpart's word with the aim of correcting him. He engages in substituting some words for others.

0005S1: in on my picture I can see a man coming out from a car looking through the  
man

006S3: [looking at through- looking at]

007S1: [yes- OK looking through the man who] is riding three boxes

The interesting question then is: how did both the subjects who were rated as High Performers and those who were rated as Low Performers incorporate these words in their compositions? The written composition scripts show clearly that the LPs tended to incorporate most of the words they had used in their verbalizations, as depicted by one of these scripts which is replete with parallel structures thus showing how repetitive their sentences were. I will first present part of the subject's conversation and then show part of the composition paragraph which he wrote after the discussion (See Appendix R, Transcript xi)

001S1: In this picture A we can see a woman a woman who is sitting near - the  
fire but in picture B we can see a woman who is sitting near the fire some food  
and in picture B- there is no sun which is appear in this also in picture A you  
can see a man-who is come from fishing but in- in picture A you can see also a  
man who is carrying a fish-a fish but in picture B- no man who is carrying a fish-

also /..7../ if you can see in picture A it appear like in the morning but in picture B you - you can't know if - it is- if whether is-is in the morning or not yes

The following is one of the paragraphs of the composition the subject wrote after the verbalization.(Composition No. 32)

This picture appeared there are the differences between . In picture "A" there are three people.

In picture A there is a sun which is shining but in picture B the sun which is shining Picture A has only one house but Picture B it appear with two houses. You can see a woman who is just sitting on the fire but in Picture B the woman who is sitting near the fire is cooking.

The discourse features of repetition affected the distribution of deictics (this, that) and nominals (This picture, the differences between..., Picture A etc...) and the use of pronominalizations, particularly the personal pronouns "you" and "we" which make the above paragraph not much different from the subject's verbalization seen in the verbal transcript.

The HPs incorporate the words they have used in the discussion but they use only a few of them. These are usually words they have themselves contributed to the group, but even when they incorporate the words they incorporate only a few phrases . Whereas S2 - a member of the LP group - uses words in parallel structures in the following transcript (Transcript v), for example, he does not do so in his written composition.

0015S1: on my picture I can see a man- a woman is cooking without a pot

0016S2: /..5../ in my picture I can see a woman /..5../ she is cooking in his pot

0017S1: In my picture I can see a road

0018S2: also and me in my picture I can see the road

One would have expected that this would result in S2 eventually incorporating words and structures in his composition, but his written text looks fairly different. (Composition No. 23)

It was in the evening. The sun is disappear in hills. There were two fishermen who are out of the river coming from their fishing. They have got one fish. One of the men is carrying a fishing rod with a fish and he is walking on the road to his house. Another man is running towards a woman who is sitting on a traditional stool and she was cooking some food.

It is interesting to note that he has incorporated some lexical items which were not present in the transcript of the discussion. Such lexical items are: disappear; a fishing rod; towards; and a traditional chair. It is interesting to note further that apart from HPs incorporating only a few of the words they used in the verbal transcript, they also managed to use them more correctly while writing. The LPs simply picked a word from the HPs and often used them wrongly. One of the features of repetition, particularly in group work, was paraphrasing, which was attempted by the HPs who were able to provide new words to others. Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1983:10) define paraphrasing simply as the "rewording of the message in an alternate, acceptable, target language construction in order to avoid a more difficult form of construction." Paraphrasing is thus a communication strategy designed to ensure that the interlocutors carry on talking. One form of paraphrasing is approximation or use of lexical items which are close semantically to the desired term. The subjects in this study, tended at times to resort to this strategy so as to understand each other, but it was the HPs who were able to offer such approximations, as shown in these extracts (See Appendix R, Transcript xxv). S3 is an HP.

0191S3: on the third picture it is shown that the man with the car has seen the action I mean the accident and he is coming out of his car- looking back at the man who has collided.

0207S3: and it seems that are discussing something are talking about the- accident, I think- maybe the driver of the car is / apologizing / or saying to the owner of the bicycle eeh (with a rising intonation)

The subject in question was probably the most competent student and monopolized the group discussions, apparently because his colleagues had confidence in him or felt they could not contribute as much. Was his use of and clarification of such words as damaged; scene; traffic police; and apologizing (though wrongly pronounced!), which he nonetheless didn't use in his composition, meant to help his group members or was he merely showing off? If we could answer such questions it might help to throw some light on the extent to which verbalization may have helped the low-rated subjects, as well as the extent to which the patterns of interaction that arose during verbalization had an impact on the subjects' performance.

#### **7.1.2.2.2 Expanding/Elaborating**

Expanding or elaborating was another strategy used by subjects in elucidating a word or a point. Expanding was a salient feature of narrative task discussions where elaborations and arguments arose as regards the sequence of events in

the pictures or when an interlocutor had to add more information to what others had already provided. The expansion was voluntary or arose as a result of prompting from a group member as shown by the questions the subjects ask one another at the end of the turns as is evident in this exchange (See Appendix R, Transcript vi):

0005S1: I can see two houses and -at the side of this two houses there is a tree and around the house there is a grass

0006S2: also and me there is a grasses and there is a man there is a fish- also there is a - road pass through from the house what about on your picture?

0007S1: I can see the man who held a stick and through that way from the bank of the river to the house what do you see again in the picture?

0008S2: eeh on my picture I can see a woman who is cooking food eeh on your picture there is a one house?

0009S1: no there is two houses -and- at the woman who is sitting at the traditional chair he is cooking a food and that food who is which is cooking was from the steam what about in your picture?

Subject S1 was thus, through S2 prompting him to say more about the picture, able to get the correct form of the word to refer to something with which the house is thatched as "grass" ; something which he acknowledges in turn 0023 as either knowing before but having forgotten or simply not knowing before. It is interesting however, to note that when subject S1 wrote his composition, he did not include the word while describing the two houses, apparently because to him the phrase "the dark" had not been clarified despite his acknowledging his interlocutor's explanation. It could also be true that he might have forgotten the word altogether.

The following is the composition he wrote after the discussion (Composition No. 28)

It was during the evening the sun was set east hill. There were two men who were fishing using a canoe. After they fish they decide to go to their homes when they rich at the bank of the river they run towards the woman who is cooking. these two men one is in front of the other a man was carring one fish by using a piece of stick and that women is sitting on the traditional chair under the tree which is at the other side of house of that side there are two houses. the bigger and the smaller one. The bigger house is in front of the smaller house. There is a road which comes in front of the bigger house and one man who carrying fish at the are putting through that way.



The subject was able to incorporate the vocabulary used in the discussion as evidenced by the use of such expressions as "a piece of stick; a bank of the river, and "a traditional chair". He is able to expand the information he gives about the characters. Thus, he does not confine himself to merely stating that the men have been fishing, but is able to state further what he thinks they are likely to do after fishing. Similarly, he does not only mention about the woman in the picture as sitting but provides further information about the actions she is engaged in. This expansion of ideas has been attained by the use of temporal conjunctions, after and when. However, his composition is monotonous because he repeats ideas he has mentioned before. The woman who is cooking while sitting on a traditional chair is mentioned in the second sentence but not until the men who are coming from fishing are mentioned are we again reminded about the traditional chair on which the woman is cooking in "these two men one is in front of the other a man was caring one fish by using a piece of stick and that women is sitting on the traditional chair..." The subject is thus unable to maintain a continuity of theme in writing and tends to assume-as he did while discussing-that the reader will understand the woman to whom he is referring.

#### **7.1.2.2.3 Clarification acts and lexis**

Clarification among the subjects under study took the form of merely giving an elliptical "yes" evaluation or responding briefly in response to a question which was itself a repetition of the previous interlocutor's statement as seen in this exchange (See Appendix R, Transcript xxv). In this exchange, each of the students is explaining what he sees in the picture, which forms a sequence of events related to other events depicted in his friends' picture cards. His response follows turns in which one of the participants - S3 - explains what he sees in turn 0033, followed by another student (S1) who speculates what could have happened to the cyclist. The response is followed by further speculation by Student S3 who speculates what the pick-up van driver could be telling the cyclist whose bicycle wheel is bent.

0032S3: Thank you Mr. Ngwenya -on my picture I can see - eh four peoples -four peoples eeh one carrying or is standing aside beside his bicycle - and another one is looking- at the man who have who has a bicycle - and those other two men are traffic police- are traffic police - are police and are looking at those men- I mean the one with a bicycle and the one who is looking at the man who has a bicycle I don't know

0033S1: [maybe maybe he has been happened there]

0033aS3:[eeh- (he laughs) he is asking maybe he is asking about something because  
the bicycle is not in good condition it seems that it has - it has it has a bend  
ring - maybe that man has got an accident/.../ so the man is- maybe asking  
what is wrong with your bicycle

0034S5: OK

0035Sx: What are

0036S3: That's all I can see in my picture maybe Mr. (name withheld) can you [tell us  
what]

0036aS5:[can you tell us what is on your picture?]

0037S2: in my picture I see two men car and one house - but this house- is the door  
/.../ and also /.../ and also (...)

0038S3: how many house (with a rising intonation)

0039S2: only one

0040S3: only one house (with a rising intonation)

0041S2: yes-and I also see - one bicycle.

The questions denoted by a rising intonation helped to elicit not only a clarification of content but spurred on the interlocutor to further expansion of his statements. There were also brief responses which served as clarifications to previous requests for clarifications as in transcript xxiii. In this exchange, an interlocutor - Student S3 - in turn 0020 is seeking clarification about what he sees on the picture card .

0020S3: but myself want to ask a question about one picture- the first picture

0021S1: which one?

0022S2: the picture about this box it belongs to whom? (with a rising intonation) that  
boy or the /dreva/ (with a rising intonation)

0023S1: oh this box is kept in the - a the pick up van [so]

0023aS3: [but what ] but what is their woman but that he  
/?/

0024S1: so the owner of that box is driver is a driver his van so I think - this  
box was not- put in - in [in order]

0025S3: [in]

0026S1: oh yes in order

The rising intonation which performed the same discourse function as that of interrogations, served also to request clarification or to check comprehension of what was stated in the previous utterance. The rising intonation was easily and mutually understood by participants as requests for one to expand what had been said before as evidenced in turns 0022 to 0025 in which the interlocutors

use the rise in intonation to prompt others to clarify about the box. It can also be said to have compensated for their lack of linguistic proficiency.

Ochs (1979) sees the repetition of lexical items as being reflective of speech which unlike writing, takes place spontaneously and is thus "unplanned". Despite the fact that repetition as a clarification device may be common among elementary writers who lack the conventions of writing, repetition of ideas for clarification was lacking in the compositions of both the HPs and LPs. Only very few of the former were able to make clarifications and even then these clarifications were restricted to causes or consequences of events, particularly in the narrative task, as one of the HPs compositions shown here reveals. Here the extensions provided by "so he came out of his van" related to consequence not explicit in the picture cues (Composition No. 76).

At a certain point in the road there was a corner. When the pick-up reached at that corner three boys fell off the pick up. Unfortunately the man who was riding a bicycle knocked the boxes and he fell off his bicycle. The front wheel of the bicycle bent. The owner of the pick up saw the accident so he came out of his van. He put on a hat on his head. When he reached on the scene he started to argue with the bicycle owner. Fortunately around the scene were two policemen. One policeman started to write notice about the accident while the second one was directing other cars where they should pass in order to avoid the accidents.

It is worth noting that the student was one who monopolized the talk in the narrative group work whose discussion assumed the highest number of turns- 241 turns - of which 116 were contributed by the above student (half the number of turns). He engages in explaining (giving information), requesting clarification as well as speculating and his turns show a fair amount of reasoning.

Apparently, the cognitive as well as the linguistic demands of the tasks may have constrained the subjects from utilizing the contents or linguistic resources that they may have derived from pair or group work discussion. The information load (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1982) occasioned by the plethora of information they had to provide regarding the sequence of events, and the vocabulary needed for describing what they saw, did certainly affect the LPs. The effect of this was twofold. These LPs had either very short compositions or simply wrote narrative compositions in a descriptive form despite the model they had been provided with before the writing task. How this affected or may not have affected the syntactic structures of the subjects' composition will now form the focus of attention. Student-student interactions and how they affected the

language of the students as they interacted, can therefore, be summed up as follows

(a) Speech acts related to Giving Information were more focused on content rather than form (syntax and vocabulary). There were no significant differences among the students as regards the way they employed speech acts, thus suggesting that both groups (the HPs and the LPs) focused on content rather than form either because they failed to explain the meanings of these words or because they were too preoccupied with the discussions per se to have any time for linguistic forms. The speech acts that predominated were: Evaluating, Acknowledgment, Repetitions of words, Repetitions of content, Low level questioning, Clarification of content, and Speculating, usually evinced by the use of expressions like I think so, may be... which did not contribute much to the students' elaboration of points or organization of discourse.

(b) The Repetition acts which brought in their wake, some clarification and expansion features, were features also noted in the written discourse but they did not help the learners to expand or elaborate points or make the points cohere. In other words, students' verbalizations realized these acts (functions) but they failed to employ them effectively in writing.

(c) There was hardly any elaboration of content or language forms thus showing that neither pair work nor group work helped the pupils to reason and showing also that the subjects concentrated mostly on content to the exclusion of other factors. This may have been due to the cognitive or linguistic demands entailed by the tasks. Another factor could have been the fact that students were not familiar with pair work/pair work and did therefore not know how to go about working together.

(d) Only the High Performers (HPs) can be said to have engaged to some extent in giving information on form and some expansion of statements made mainly in narrative compositions. It can therefore be concluded that student-student interaction was not ideal for generating language forms such as lexical items and that the word-types appearing in the students' scripts must have either originated from the teacher or were simply known beforehand by the pupils, particularly the HPs, before writing. Teacher-student interactions (especially during model composition lessons) rather than student-student interactions in pairs or groups, were mainly responsible for the lexical features in the students' written scripts.

### 7.1.3 Syntactic structures in the written compositions

#### 7.1.3.1 Locative and existential expressions

In the previous chapter, I have mentioned that the analysis of *locative* and *existential* expressions in written compositions was deemed important because existential expressions make a proposition known to the hearer, and serve particularly, the communicative function of introducing new concepts or bringing a point to the attention of the hearer. Locatives, on the other hand, relate the proposition or concept to a location or direction. Locatives and existentials were, thus, naturally expected to be structures characteristic of the descriptive compositions as well as of utterances leading to their creation. Existentials occur as *there + copula verb + Noun + locative*, or *there + be + Noun + participle verb + locative*, or *verb 'have' + noun phrase structure + locative construction*. Locatives and existential expressions are inextricably bound although there are cases where a locative expression could be left out altogether depending on the question -particularly in oral discourse - to which the interlocutor is responding as in: What is there on the table?, a reply to which could conceivably omit the use of the locative expression. The omission of an existential expression in situations where the character or object rather than the event appeared to be the focus of attention as in : In the picture are two policemen talking to the driver of the pick-up van did not appear in the texts apparently because these constructions require a fairly sophisticated understanding of the change of subject-word order in declarative sentences (i.e the subject-verb inversion). These are structures which are learned later and which do pose a problem even to high school NS students. The use of the existential expression with a non-finite element as in : There is a man cycling near the pick-up van were common in both the discussion and the written composition, but were mostly used by High Performers who knew that they could use such expressions in place of relative clause constructions as in : There is a woman sitting on a traditional chair instead of the more common relativized construction: There is a woman who is sitting on a traditional chair.

It can, therefore, be generally said that whereas both the HPs and the LPs are able to use existential and locative expressions of the "*There + be + N+ locative*" readily well, only the HPs were able to readily use the "*There +be+N+ participle verb+locative* construction in place of the relative clause construction, thus suggesting that the use of a non-finite construction can be seen as a measure of a learner's linguistic competence since those who used these non-

finite constructions were also able to use relative clause constructions quite easily.

Givon (1979), writing on the relationship of discourse to syntax, posits two types of structures embodied in utterances, and apparently transferable to writing. The first type is what he calls a *presupposition* construction and the second one is the *assertion* the speaker makes. Presuppositional constructions are those in which there is shared background knowledge between the speaker and the hearer, or writer and reader as in the use of relative clauses or passives. In the latter, for example, the sentence "The medicine was prescribed to the patient", though devoid of an agent, is likely to lead one to assume that it was a doctor who prescribed the medicine since doctors are the ones who usually prescribe medicine. The same could be said of the anaphoric pronoun "he" in the sentences: His uncle came to see him. He brought him a present, as referring to his uncle. Givon (1979) regards existential expressions as being less difficult than the presuppositional expressions. This is largely because locatives and existentials tend to get encoded in the child's first language as the child interacts with his mother. These structures are therefore, identified with motherese (mother-child talk) and would, therefore, tend to be more easily learned than structures of presupposition which require a young learner to conceive of some abstract shared knowledge with his interlocutor. That could explain why it becomes customary among language teachers to start their first language lessons with such existential expressions as: There is a book on the table. As Givon (1979) goes on arguing, children share very little of the presuppositional background which elders have and utilize for communication. Because of this and because of the lack of strategies for processing complex information, simple straightforward expressions such as those embodying existentials, would be more appropriate for beginners. In order to enhance understanding, existential expressions do co-occur with expressions denoting place or position or time. The discourse function served by the presence of adverbial phrases indicating place, is probably to relate what the learner sees to the position or place usually occupied by the subject in question. Hence, the sentence: "There is a woman sitting on a stool", links the idea of a woman sitting and the place she usually sits on.

The descriptive composition, particularly, was meant to provide the subjects with the opportunity for using existential and locative expressions. As Table 7.14 illustrates, for the whole sample and for the two groups of high performers and low performers, there were more locative expressions than existential expressions in the teacher-fronted tasks, both descriptive and narrative.

Contrary to expectations, there were more locative expressions in the narrative task than in the descriptive task. The latter was also almost equally matched by the narrative task in the number of existential expressions. This could have been due to the fact that the students sometimes wrote the narrative task in the same way as they had done the descriptive, making it appear more of a descriptive account than a story. There was also an occasion in one school when the teacher, after presenting the model of a narrative composition, asked the students to describe what they saw and not to write the story, which the students did. This reinforces the fact that however communicative the task may be, the role of the teacher in intervening or not intervening in the writing process, affects how the learners will approach the task.

Table 7.14. The number of locatives and existential expressions in the descriptive and narrative task compositions for the whole sample (N=24) and percentage of locatives and existential expressions used by high performers (N=6) and low performers (N=6).

Expression	Whole Sample				High Performers				Low Performers			
	Descriptive		Narrative		Descriptive		Narrative		Descriptive		Narrative	
	TF	PW	TF	GW	TF	PW	TF	GW	TF	PW	TF	GW
Locatives	110	106	139	136	28	30	44	42	30	22	24	19
Percentage					25.4	28.3	31.6	30.8	27.2	20.7	17.3	13.9
Existentials	48	47	42	47	15	11	11	17	14	14	14	9
Percentage					31.3	23.4	26.2	36.2	29.2	29.8	33.4	19.1

It is evident that the production of existentials and locative expressions predominates in teacher-fronted tasks and group work tasks in both the descriptive and narrative tasks. One reason for this could be that in teacher-fronted tasks, the conversation being teacher-dominated, assumed the orthodox Initiation-Response-Evaluation pattern (Coulthard, 1977; Sinclair and Coulthard 1975; Bellack et al 1966). As a result of this most of the students' responses were answers to questions regarding what the students saw in the pictures. The students were often predisposed to use existential and locative expressions (there is/ there are) more often in the teacher-fronted than in pair-work where there was more flexibility in explaining about the pictures. Whereas in teacher-fronted tasks the students awaited a teacher's question before replying, in pair work, the students simply narrated in turn what each saw, often using the modal verb

"can", and were thus able to avoid using existential expressions, as revealed in one of the transcripts (See Appendix R, Transcript v):

0001S1: What is on your picture Alexander?

0002S2: On my picture I see three people - one of them /..8../ was cooking his food

0003S1: On my picture I can see three peoples one of them /..5../ eeh is cooking his food

0004S2: In my picture I can see two peoples

0005S1: /..10../ also in my picture I can see one tree two houses

Teacher-student interactional patterns can, therefore, be said to have been better disposed towards the production of locative and existential features because teacher-questions and pupil responses tend to have a regular pattern (e.g Teacher: What can you see on the table? Pupil: There is a book on the table) which results in both locatives and existential statements. This may also be the case when pupils are in pairs and one of them tends to ask many questions or acts as if he were the teacher. Group work would thus tend to avoid such patterns since questions may not be asked and each pupil may contribute points in turn. The fact that such patterns are also observable in group work shows that the interaction patterns in pair work were more or less similar to those in group work or that the subjects went about doing the tasks in the same way.

As regards the accuracy of using existential and locative expressions, it can be said that generally, the subjects' pattern of errors was in subject-verb agreements which appears to be a thorny problem among EFL learners and the use of prepositions. The subjects had no problem in the use of the introductory "There is /there are" expressions. This could be due to two reasons. Form 2 students have already had some exposure to some English during their primary school and might therefore, not find these expressions to be unusually difficult. Moreover, Swahili (the subjects' national language) abounds in existential expressions in both the initial position and the final position in the sentences.

### **7.1.3.2 Relative clauses, wh-clause expressions and prepositional phrases**

I have pointed out in Section 7.1.3.1 how Givon (1979) views syntax as pivotal to the development of propositions in written discourse. Syntax becomes important because the writer, unlike the speaker, has no other way to make his ideas known to the reader except by making his statements explicit through



competent use of linguistic devices. Widdowson (1978) and Lautamati (1990) go further than Givon in seeing this process of making ideas known by using language to link propositions, as inextricably intertwined with the idea of coherence or making the text hold together.

Among the structures used to link propositions in discourse are relative clauses and *wh*- constructions (e.g. This is what he told me). However, since most of the structures used by the subjects of this study were relative clauses, I will devote my discussion to relative clauses. Relative clauses, like other complex linguistic structures, have been said to be characteristic of written discourse and are assumed to characterize formal language, though there are of course, speeches (e.g. public lectures or prepared political speeches) which assume a formal language dimension and are likely to abound in relative clauses. In distinguishing writing from speaking, Chafe (1982) views writing as having a feature of 'integration' or packaging of information into idea units. He states that information may be packaged in writing through the use of nominalizations, conjoined phrases, prepositional phrases and relative clauses. Speech is, on the other hand, seen as 'fragmentary' as evidenced by the abundance of coordinating conjunctions at the beginning of sentences and fillers such as 'mh!' or hedges such as "I think so; that's all".

One would, therefore, assume that pupils would tend to use more relative clauses in their written compositions than in their discussions, and that the use of these clauses would mostly be a feature of high rated rather than low rated compositions. The assumption is based on the fact that relative clauses are acquired during the later stages of learning a foreign language and that apparently, even when taught, the EFL learner will attempt to avoid using relative clauses. Hansen-Strain (1989) in a study designed to ascertain the difference between 'oral' and 'literate' cultures in their use of spoken and written English, found that the former (Tongans and Samoans) tended to use features of spoken English in their written scripts contrary to what their counterparts (Chinese and Koreans) did. The interesting finding was that although relative clauses are deemed to be a feature of 'planned discourse', they were more frequently and more accurately understood by subjects from the oral culture ("unplanned discourse") than by subjects from the literate culture, though the latter could still write them better. The results could, probably be attributed to the possibility of subjects from the oral culture using relative constructions in their language which have the same construction as those of English. Why they

could not write them accurately is, however, a problem that might have to do with the fact that they could not effectively use these structures to organize the information they were writing about. The embedding of one proposition into another is an indicator of complexity, though of course, there may be other factors that bring about this complexity such as the writer's lack of background knowledge of the topic. . This would presuppose that it might be difficult for him to ascertain which structures to use, and, even if he had an inkling of them, the tendency would be to avoid those structures such as relative clauses which add to the complexity.

When FL students begin learning English, they usually begin with simple structures and then gradually move on to more complicated structures in the later years. However, how fast they are able to internalize these complex structures, depends on the way the structures are taught to them as well as on the extent to which the learners encounter these structures in their day to day use of English. Commenting on why children are able to master the use of wh-questions before they are able to master relative clauses, Givon (1979) has this to say:

the former are acquired first as a syntactically non-complex pattern, that is, as single WH-pronoun. Furthermore, at the time the WH-pronoun pattern is acquired, most of the NPs used by the child in discourse, are referentially unique - that is, pronoun, demonstratives and proper nouns - so that there is no functional need for relative clauses, whose main function is to establish definite descriptions (p.86).

Relative clauses do, therefore, tend to develop later among young learners as the need for explicit statements in factual accounts or arguments arise.

Table 7.15. Number of post-modified det + prep.phrase and det + N + wh-clause/ relative clause structures in the whole sample and the number of det + prep. phrase and det + N + wh- clause/relative clause structures among the HPs and the LPs across tasks.

Type of post-modified structure	Whole sample				High Performers				Low Performers			
	Descr.		Narr.		Descr.		Narr.		Descr.		Narr.	
	TF	PW	TF	GW	TF	PW	TF	GW	TF	PW	TF	GW
Prepositional phrase	8	14	6	17	0	3	0	9	1	3	0	1
WH- relative struct.	36	45	64	93	9	10	13	23	9	17	9	16

Group	Prep. Phrase					Relative clauses				
	Total	Corr	%	Inc	%	Total	Corr	%	Inc	%
Descriptive compositions										
Teacher-fronted										
Both high rated and low rated	2	2	100	0	0	17	12	70.6	5	2.9
High rated	1	1	50	0	0	8	7	58.4	1	20%
Low rated	1	1	50	0	0	9	5	41.6	4	80
Pair work										
Both high rated and low rated	4	3	75	1	25	23	20	86.9	3	13.1
High rated	4	3	75	1	25	9	7	3.5	2	6.7
Low rated	0	-	-	-	-	14	13	65	1	33.3
Narrative compositions										
Teacher-fronted										

Group	Prep. Phrase					Relative clauses				
	Total	Corr	%	Inc	%	Total	Corr	%	Inc	%
Both high rated and low rated	3	3	100	0	0	23	18	78.3	5	21.7
High rated	3	3	100	0	0	14	14	77.8	0	0
Low rated	0	-	-	-	-	9	4	22.2	5	100
Group work										
Both high rated and low rated	15	10	66.7	5	33.3	41	27	65.8	14	34.2
High rated	12	10	100	2	40	24	21	58.5	3	21.4
Low rated	3	0	0	3	60	17	6	41.5	11	78.6

An analysis of errors in the use of these syntactic structures by the subjects, revealed that there was a tendency for poor writers to use relative clauses profusely with the result that they tended to use them wrongly. The good writers used relative clauses sparingly and sometimes avoided them altogether. Hence the good writers often use such structures as: "I can see the boy running towards the woman"; rather than the relativized construction: "I can see the boy who is running towards the woman". Among the errors appearing in compositions as regards the use of relative clauses was the omission of the copula verb after a relative pronoun as these sentences from one of the students' scripts show (Composition No. 66):

The one day there are are four people, the one has a b icycle and the one man who st  
stopping a man of the bicycle.... And the one day who man trying again to drawing the  
bicycle and a one motorcar of policeman is stop a motorcar. .

Another common error was the use of reference pronouns and the positioning of an anaphoric pronoun after an antecedent relative pronoun.

The car's driver open the car's door got out of the car I think the drive it it was the kind  
because he go to help the man he was ride the bicycle, suddenly the policeman who  
was passing in that area he got report he start to stop the cars, lorries and buses the  
another they were gone to to see the accident, who were drove the mistake. I think after  
the observation of the police the man who was done the mistake he will punished.

Swahili, the national language, has available many relative clause constructions but it is undeniable that the relative pronoun+verb [which includes a pronominal marker] order in Swahili, makes it possible for learners of English

to make mistakes if they transfer forms of the Swahili relativization literally into English.

A discussion of the distribution and patterns of relative clauses as well as how these structures were generated in the subjects' compositions will now be related to the discourse features which were notable in the discussions so as to ascertain how these features contributed to the occurrence of these syntactical structures in the written compositions.

### **7.1.3.3 Discourse acts and the generation of prepositional phrases and relative clauses**

From the transcript data, it appears that there were two persistent discourse features which may be said to have contributed to the use of the prepositional and relative clause constructions in the written compositions. One of these features was the questioning or elicitation strategy used by the subjects, which involved both low level and high level questions. What is significant about the responses to or evaluations of these questions very much dictated the occurrence or absence of prepositional or relative clause structures.

When the transcripts are examined, it becomes evident that when the responses to questions were short, they tended to be devoid of these syntactical features. However, when the first response to the question was long enough to embody an elaboration or expansion of ideas, there was generally a substantial production of prepositional phrases and relative clauses. Similarly, when the interlocutors avoided asking each other questions and resorted to merely listing what they saw, the prevalence of these structures depended on how short or how long the responses were. Hence, long turns tended to generate these structures whereas short turns did not; suggesting that propositions regarding the identification of a referent in a context was centered around long turns.

Most of these turns involved subjects giving information, coupled with expanding and elaborating or repeating the information that had been previously given. These structures were lacking when elliptic questions and subsequent elliptic responses were given, though these appeared favorable for the generation of existential expressions, particularly when the exchanges involved repetition or listing of events or objects seen in the pictures. There were also occasions when one of the participants, rather than elaborate on what the other interlocutor had said, simply gave elliptical answers as can be

seen in this exchange in which S1 provides information and S2 merely acknowledges. In such situations, the exchanges appeared to be devoid of prepositional phrases (See Appendix R, Transcript xxiii).

0003S1: so- I think this man is try to equalize /..5../ [information]

0003aS2:[information]

0004S1: and- and try to to say anything for this dri/?/ going to /?/ so I think (....)

0005S1: it seems that the man who was driving a bicycle

0006S1: yes

0007S2: it has got injury

0008S12:eeh yes

0009S2: because he is very angry

0010S1: eeh and this accident is very bigger

0011S3: yes I think he is up hunting for a driver

0012S1: which one?

0013s3: that ro (.....)

The same trend is observed in short low level questions and elliptical responses as evidenced by this exchange (See Appendix R, Transcript vii).

0004aS1:[there is no sun]- so you mean that in picture number A there is a sun but on picture number B there is no sun

0005S2: yes

0006S1: OK that's OK eeh (with a rising intonation)-another difference (with a rising intonation)

0007S2: in picture number A there are two people

0008S1: one woman and one man

These short turns comprising low level questions and their accompanying elliptical responses which were mostly acknowledgments, are illustrative of the low performers' utterances. These utterances are different from those of high performers whose long turns, despite their having many repetitions, contain some elaborations of previous utterances as depicted in this exchange (See Appendix R, Transcript iv).

0002S2: What can you see on the picture?

0003S1: I see a man a box one man- two of them - is climbing /.../ see boxes /../ the man jumped from the bicycle beside the bicycle/..5../ two houses and /..8../ who pushed who pushed the man who who was riding a bicycle - a bicycle that's all - how do you see in the picture?

What we see in these extracts is that the elaboration of points, however incomplete or at times bordering on incomprehensibility, do nevertheless, elicit the use of relative clauses. In turn 0003 for example, the interlocutor is telling about a man - apparently a driver - but suddenly shifts his topic and starts talking about boxes and soon reverts to talking about the man - this time, the cyclist - and in a welter of confusion, starts talking about houses. However, it seems that when he realizes that he has to focus his attention on the car driver, he identifies the latter by stating that he is the one "who pushed who pushed the man who who was riding a bicycle", his repetition of the relative pronoun "who" being a probable indication of his search for memory so that he identifies the right man. It therefore appears unsurprising that the narrative tasks should lead to the occurrence of many prepositional and relative clause features since most of the long turns were generated in narrative tasks. Generating long turns, cannot, nevertheless, be seen as the sole factor for the production of complex structures. Partners in the discussion must be willing to cooperate in providing adequate information or elaborating points for discussion. From my observation, this cooperation appeared to be forthcoming from pairs or groups in which the subjects were more or less equally matched. Where one subject or a few subjects dominated the discussion, those who kept a low profile, merely listened to the discussion or gave elliptical answers that were devoid of any substantive content or complex linguistic form or simply accepted whichever answer was offered by their more proficient partners.

#### **7.1.3.4 Syntactic analysis of sentences and clauses in written compositions**

The length of a composition is usually seen by many researchers on writing as representing its quality . The length of a composition can be measured by the number of sentences or clauses as well as the number of words. It would, therefore, be assumed that the longer the composition the better the composition is. Proponents of this view, notably Witte and Faigley (1981); Mills (1990); and Stotsky (1986), show in their studies a significant relationship between the length of compositions and their quality. Mills (1990) replicating Witte and Faigley's study, found that low rated essays tended to be shorter than high rated ones and that , there was a significant relationship between the mean length of sentences of subjects and their grades. While it is easy to accept this view if we assume that the composition is written by a native speaker of a language, it may not be easy to do so for an FL learner. An FL learner may

write a long text which, nevertheless, shows no logical relationship among sentences and which may be rated lower than that of his native counterpart whose short essay employs accurate linguistic forms and shows a logical relationship. It is conceivable that even the manner in which this logical relationship is made known to the reader may matter. The writer may use simple sentences but still convey his message while another one may encode the message in a series of subordinate clauses that constitute a complex sentence. Whether the reader feels attracted to the latter or the former may be a question of the style he deems appropriate, though what matters is the message conveyed.

School writing whether in the subject English language or in other subjects of the curriculum where academic information is to be learned, demands that the student be exposed to some form of writing that will inevitably involve expounding ideas and therefore making use of complex structures because of the nature of the information that has to be packaged. Making use of these syntactical structures is, however, one thing and using them correctly is another. It was on this basis that I counted the number of sentences as well as the types of sentences and clauses writers used and the frequency of clauses. The analysis of sentences was first done by counting the number of sentences and the number of clauses as well as the clause types on the basis of whether they were finite or non-finite (see Table 7.20 ).

Finite clauses are clauses with a verbal element which is a tense marker of the present or past form or a modal. Finite clauses abound in the simple sentences and even in the compound sentences of spoken discourse. Non-finite expressions may, therefore, be regarded as more related to the written language and hence the formal language of the school. One would, therefore, expect to find features of non-finite constructions in written compositions, though this would be a rare phenomenon among elementary EFL learners whose written English is still akin to their spoken . Later, after I had counted the sentences I grouped them into various levels of subordination. I counted sentences which had only one subordinate clause, those which had two subordinate clauses, others which had three subordinate clauses and eventually those with four or more (see Table 7.18). Writers and researchers on writing see subordination as characteristic of a language which is more explicit and elaborate (Biber, 1986; Chafe, 1982 and Beaman, 1984) and which is regarded as typical of the written language although there are types of spoken language which evince features of the written language. The assumption,



therefore, is that a writer with two, three, or more subordinate clauses would be displaying more competence in organizing information than his counterpart who has only one subordinate clause.

#### **7.1.3.4.1 Number of sentences and number of words in sentences**

There was a similar number of sentences in all tasks except the narrative group work which generally appeared to have about twice the number of sentences as other tasks (see Table 7.17). The number of sentences ranged from one to twelve in the descriptive teacher-fronted task to between two and thirteen in the descriptive pair work. In the narrative task, sentences ranged from between two and thirteen in the teacher-fronted task to between one and twenty five in the narrative group work. This tends to suggest that the nature of the task did not affect the length of the composition and that as far as the organization of the classroom was concerned, only group work seemed to have an impact on the length of the composition. This means therefore, that if the length of a composition can be seen as a determining factor in its quality, then group work should be a useful type of classroom activity. I shall return to this point later in the following chapter.

Since the number of words used in each sentence helps to constitute the total length of a composition, it was decided to count the number of words in sentences. Witte and Faigley (1981) and Stotsky (1986) in their studies on writing, also employed the same method although they also looked at the uncommon words (word types) used (see Section 7.1.3.4.1 above). When I counted the number of words per composition in each sentence for each subject, I found that the high performers had a higher mean total number of words per composition than the low performers for both the descriptive compositions and the narrative compositions. However, the low performers had more words per sentence than the high performers. This finding is somewhat unexpected and misleading in the sense that most of the low performers had fewer sentences than the high performers and most of sentences were along a series of coordinate structures e.g. The policeman came and he asked the pickup driver a few questions, and so the average number of words may not be a reliable indicator of the quality of the composition. Moreover the number of words used cannot tell us whether these words were correctly used or were meaningful.

Table 7.17. Number of sentences, number of words, average number of words and words per sentence for the whole sample and among the HPs and the LPs across tasks.

Group and composition type	Number of sentences	Number of words	Average number of words per composition	Words per sentence
Whole sample				
Descriptive	270	4163	173.4	15.1
Narrative	304	6173	257.2	20.3
HPs				
Descriptive	97	1208	201.3	12.5
Narrative	124	2078	346.3	16.7
LPs				
Descriptive	45	1099	183.2	24.4
Narrative	35	1031	171.8	29.4

Table 7.18. Total number of simple sentences, compound sentences and complex sentences; total number of correctly used and incorrectly used compound clauses and the number of correctly and incorrectly used subordinate clauses of complex sentences among the HPs and the LPs across tasks.

Group/Number of sentences	Descriptive composition		Narrative composition	
	Teach.front.	Pair work	Teach.front.	Group work
HIGH PERFORMERS				
Simple sentences	23	22	15	25
Corr. simple sent.	17	17	10	14
Inc. simple sent.	6	5	5	11
Compound sentences	9	14	7	5
Corr. comp. clause	14	15	9	6
Inc. comp. clause	4	13	5	4
Complex sentences	14	18	31	45
Subordinate clauses	18	19	47	67
Corr. subord. clause	13	4	26	33
Inc.. subord.clause	5	15	21	34
Total no. of sentences	46	54	53	75

Group/Number of sentences	Descriptive composition		Narrative composition	
	Teach.front.	Pair work	Teach.front	Group work
<b>LOW PERFORMERS</b>				
Simple sentences	22	14	8	12
Corr. simple sent.	5	1	1	0
Inc..simple sent.	17	13	7	12
Compound sentences	11	7	8	7
Corr. comp.clause	5	3	1	0
Inc..comp. clause	19	11	15	15
Complex sentences	12	11	13	19
No. of subord. clause	17	16	23	37
Corr. subord. clause	2	6	7	1
Inc.. subord.clause	15	10	16	36
Total no. of sentences	45	33	29	38

The analysis of simple, compound and complex sentences was done by counting each of the simple sentences and establishing how many of these were wrongly used. The total number of compound sentences and complex sentences was also ascertained but in addition to counting the number of the compound sentences and complex sentences, the number of clauses embodied in these compound clauses as well as the number of subordinate clauses embodied in complex clauses was also ascertained. This was deemed important because compound clauses differ from complex clauses in the sense that compound clauses will usually have coordinating conjunctions which link two ideas whereas a complex sentences may link the ideas through a series of linguistic devices such as participial phrases, adverbial phrases or nominal clauses which would tend to exhibit far more complex use of language than the use of compound clauses.

It was therefore, conjectured that subjects who used more of complex subordinate clauses than compound clauses would display a more complex use of language, though this did not mean that they would necessarily be using those structures correctly. A count of compound sentences revealed that there was not much difference between the HPs and the LPs in the use of simple sentences as well as in the use of compound sentences for both the descriptive composition task and the narrative composition task. However, it was in the number of complex sentences that the two groups differed. Whereas the LPs showed only a slight increase in the number of complex sentences as they

moved from the descriptive task to the narrative task, the HPs showed quite a dramatic increase in the use of complex sentences in both the teacher fronted narrative composition task and the narrative group work task. The HPs had twice as many complex sentences in the narrative task as the LPs. The descriptive task tended to favour an inordinate use of compound sentences, and the results indicate that there were more compound sentences in the descriptive composition task than there were in the narrative composition task.

Compound sentences usually involve the linking of proposition which express related ideas by the use of conjunctions. It would appear that because the descriptive composition task involved explaining rather than providing arguments for or against a point, the tendency was for subjects to simply mention a character or event in one clause and relate it to another clause, the consequence of which was to produce such compound sentences as: The man is going to the river and his wife is preparing a meal. Using a coordinating conjunction may not give us any meaningful information as may be witnessed in oral discourse when interlocutors employ a lot of coordinating conjunctions simply to sustain their conversation or to show that their turns are continuing. This was also often the case in many of the compositions which have a lot of coordinating conjunctions inserted supposedly to explain a proposition but in most cases these conjunctions were used in the same way as in the discussions, to simply indicate that the writer was about to mention something. This serves to explain why descriptive composition tasks which involved subjects referring to what they had stated before, tended to exhibit a lot of compound sentences. The subjects often used conjunctions in compound sentences to link previous ideas to new ones in both the oral composition tasks and the written compositions.

The fact that the LPs used fewer complex sentences than the HPs and also the fact that the LPs had almost twice as many errors as the HPs is an indication of the fact that the narrative task exposed the learners to language that was a bit beyond their common knowledge of vocabulary and grammar but which is certainly suited to the improvement of English. It can therefore be stated that both the narrative composition discussion that took place prior to the subjects' writing of compositions and the written narrative compositions were better placed to equip the subjects with language resources than the descriptive tasks.

### 7.1.3.4.2. Complex sentences and subordination

Quirk et al (1985:1040) regard coordination of sentences as "the kind of link most used for optimum ease of comprehension... which is vague in the sense that it leaves the specific logical relationship to the influence of the speaker". They argue that this is often so with the use of the coordinator "and". Although they do not state precisely so, one would infer that coordinating conjunctions can be understood mostly when there is a shared context between the interlocutors and that coordination appears prominent in spoken discourse where an interlocutor's partner is able to tell what the interlocutor means. This would presuppose that subordination is mostly - though not exclusively - relevant and auspicious in written discourse because of the explicitness and specificity of detail required of written discourse. Quirk et al give these examples in which the coordinating conjunctions "and" and "but" are used but which could be omitted altogether, and suggest thus that coordination is mostly a property of the spoken mode:

He reached for the phone and (then) asked for the operator  
(coordination)

Reaching for the phone he asked for the operator (subordination)

Jane was the eldest and (so) she looked after the others (coordination)

As Jane was the eldest, she looked after the others (subordination)

What is pertinent here is not that coordination structures lead to poor quality writing. Coordination structures do in fact abound in much EFL writing. However, the written style tends to be predisposed towards structures of subordination. This predisposition has been attributed by many researchers to the complexity of information that is packed in by subordinate structures, a notion rejected by others like Halliday (1979); Beaman (1984); and Biber (1986) who believe that the use of subordinate clauses may be merely due to the need to "integrate" the information (Chafe, 1982) that would otherwise be fragmentary or be in loose syntactical structures in spoken discourse. Subordination has also been seen as a marker of competence in language since subordinating syntactical structures are "an important information organizing device" (Tyler et al 1988:105) realized through such structures as relative clauses and noun complements. Tyler et al argue that when information appears in a coordinating conjunction, it is rather "diffuse and amorphous" (p.107) whereas the use of relative clause construction tends to more tightly relate the information. They give the following examples to illustrate their point.

- (A) The negative heuristic is the hard core of the theory, and it cannot be changed and it cannot be violated.
- (B) The negative heuristic is the hard core of the theory, which cannot be changed or violated.

The underlined relative clause in sentence (B) links the idea of the first clause to it and is thus has more cohesively packed information than sentence (A). Some studies have related competence in the use of subordinates to general competence in language, and they cite competence in using subordinate clauses as one of the factors distinguishing mainstream children from non-mainstream children. The non-mainstream children are regarded as lacking the formal language used in schools and as using language structures that are not acceptable in schools. Some of these studies are those of Collins and Michaels (1986) who found that competent white children in one American school were better able to use subordinate clauses in writing a narrative after speaking it than their black counterparts who lacked familiarity with literate language and resorted to using coordination conjunctions and other simple structures. Hemphill (1989) who studied working class children and middle class children, found that middle class children took longer turns than their working class counterparts. The latter used mostly backchannels and often failed to complete sentences. They were unable to expand a topic either. Middle class children, on the other hand, tended to pack information "into new assertions in either relative clauses or subordinate constructions" (p.283) and thus had complex structures available to them which he asserts were an outcome of the middle class ability to hold the floor in conversation. Language cannot be divorced from other socio-cultural or ideological issues such as class structures or inequality but I think it may not be pertinent to delve into such matters at this point when attention is directed to a discussion of the results.

Table 7.19. The number of subordinate clauses used in complex sentences in compositions of the HPs and the LPs across tasks and the number of correct and incorrect subordinate clauses among the HPs and the LPs across tasks.

Group	Descriptive composition								Narrative composition							
	Teacher Fronted				Pair work				Teacher Fronted				Group work			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
HPs	11	3	0	0	17	1	0	0	16	14	1	0	29	10	6	0
Corr.	13	4		26	33											
Incorr.	5		15		21	34										
LPs	8	3	1	0	6	5	0	0	6	3	1	1	7	2	3	2
Corr.	2		6		7	1										
Incorr.	15	10		16	36											

The results of the analysis of complex sentences (see Table 7.19 above) showed that, on the whole, there was not an enormous difference in the quantity of subordinate clauses in complex sentences produced by the HPs and the LPs. In the descriptive composition, for instance, the HPs had 14 subordinate clauses in the teacher-fronted composition and 18 subordinate clauses in pair work, while the LPs had 12 and 11 subordinate clauses in teacher-fronted and pair work tasks respectively. It was, however, in the narrative task that there was some discernible difference. The HPs had more than twice as many subordinate clauses as the LPs in the teacher-fronted descriptive and pair work descriptive tasks. However, the LPs still had almost twice as many errors as the HPs. What was significant about the complex sentences across both the HPs and the LPs group was that most of the complex sentences contained only a single subordinate clause. There were hardly any four-subordinate clause sentences.

From these results it can be justifiably concluded that the narrative task - both teacher fronted and group work based - provides much more scope for the generation of syntactical structures which show various levels of relationship such as cause and effect than the descriptive tasks do. The reason could be that narrative group work elicited arguments and some elaboration of various points, unlike the descriptive task which involved mostly listing people and objects which could be seen. What is also worth mentioning is that pair work did not seem to improve on teacher fronted work in the generation of complex

structures unless the participants in the interaction were competent enough to produce them.

In some exchanges there are cases where some participants merely provided some framing or backchannelling as they agreed with what their partners had said, without providing any explanation or elaboration. This was especially the case in the long discussions of the narrative task. In fact in the student questionnaire (see Appendix S1), 87.5 per cent of the students in the sample agreed that it was easy writing about facts or explaining, thus underscoring the point why they might have found it easier to sustain a conversation in narrative tasks than in descriptive tasks. In another question regarding discussions, (see Appendix S1) over 75 per cent of the subjects agreed that long discussions help in expressing ideas, although only a few of the subjects were capable of sustaining these long discussions.

In the interviews, when the subjects were asked for which type of composition they lacked ideas, 58.3 per cent of the respondents stated that they found narratives difficult. Again 62.5 per cent of the respondents when interviewed (see Appendix U) said that they learned many new words when telling a story. The main reason given for this assertion was that there are many more things to talk about in a story than in describing something. In general they claimed that they found narratives linguistically and cognitively demanding.

Subordination features were discernible in the oral data whenever the interlocutors were engaged in an argument or had to hypothesize and present their own points of view or whenever there was a need to clarify a point. The following exchange highlights one of these features which is that of clarification or expansion of the point of view of S1 in turn 0030 (See Appendix R, Transcript xiv).

0023S1: a woman is cooking some food and a man is carrying -[carrying]

0023aS2: [carrying]

0024S1: carrying fish with we can say that he is coming from fishing aah and that boy-  
on the picture- I don't know their son

0025S2: I think he is coming from playing

0026S1: yeah

0027S2: with his fellows now in the evening he has come for

0028S1: yeah

0029S2: he is coming home for his dinner- and sleep I think so



0030S1: yaah and for me I can say that he is he has see aah his father is n coming from sleeping so he is running to her his mother or maybe her mother and he is saying that - eh my father is coming - he has got a fish so today we are going [to enjoy] (laughter)

Student S1 takes up utterances from Student S2 and attempts not only to complete them but goes on to elaborate on what he has just said, apparently signalling that the information given by S2 may not have been adequate. This is signalled by the use of such prediction markers as "maybe" as well as the use of the causal conjunction "so" to state his reasons. This is what the same subject later writes in his composition after the pair work discussion (Composition No. 41).

It is evening in a certain village which I can see. There are two houses one bigger and better than another. Apart from these houses there is a tree which I can't notice it belong to which kind of fruits. And there are three people one woman a boy and a man. This woman is cooking some food while this boy is running towards her. I think he is going to inform he mother that his father is coming because there is a man coming with a very big fish. He is from fishing in a lake or a river. This fish which this man is carry is fixed to a stick in such a way that it can hang without fall. So it is obvious that people in this village are fishermen. But according to the appearance of their village, these people are not well improved in fishing. They fish only for food. And their houses have grass roofs. But I hope they will soon improve.

It is obvious that S1 exploits the language resources of the discussion to elaborate on some points. The use of words and expressions like "apart from"; "I think"; "because"; "in such a way that"; "so"; "but according to" all signal the additional information he gives. He not only writes about the boy running towards his mother but also speculates about why he is doing so, by linking the idea of running and the fact that the man has got a fish which the woman will probably cook. In the last paragraph, he goes beyond the information provided in the picture by suggesting that the men in the picture could be earning their living by fishing. His last sentence "But I hope they will improve", is again further proof of his ability to round off the idea he has been writing on. The information contained in turns 0037 to 1141 of the transcript (Transcript xiv) in which Student S1 is talking with his colleague about the fish one of the men in the picture is carrying, shows this coherent thinking.

0037S1: we don't know what types of fish maybe the Nile fish called "sangara" (laughs)

0038S2: yes

0039S1: sangara

0040S2: very big sangara

0041S1: very big you know look- very nice - you know these people who live nearby these people who live nearby lakes, rivers and oceans you know most of them are fishermens are fishermen - their main economic activity is [fishing]

00 41aS2:[this is the main ] activity yaah you know the main activity of a certain place depends on the geographical conditions of the place - if there is water the main economic activity or main occupation - is automatically fishing yaah.

Both S1 and S2 are able to take on each other's previous utterances, repeating them initially (see turns 0040, 0041 and 0041a). The participants repeat words to stress a point they have been talking about. The expression "you know" has some significance in the sense that it shows how amicably their conversation has been going on and is thus a discourse marker of the camaraderie that seems to be developing between the two, but it also signals the coming of further information. I find it worth mentioning this because, at least in the Tanzanian classroom context (except in universities) none of the students would have been all that free to address his teacher with those expressions. Hence, the fact that such words are used among equals to spur each to grope for a point is a further manifestation of the significance of a relaxed atmosphere for academic tasks. It is worth noting that both of these participants were HPs to understand how only the fairly proficient students were able to interact usefully.

#### **7.1.3.4.3 Analysis of finite and non-finite clauses in simple sentences**

Some reference was made in passing to finite and non-finite constructions. I would now like to present an analysis of the finite and non-finite clauses which were employed by the subjects of the study in their compositions.

Table 7.20. Number of sentences, mean number of sentences, number of finite and non-finite clauses, mean number of finite and non-finite clauses and the standard deviation of sentences, finite and non-finite clauses

Group	Type of genre	No. of sentences			Number of clauses					
		Tot.	M	SD	Finite			Non-finite		
Tot.	M				SD	Tot.	M	SD	Tot.	M
HPs + LPs										
	TF Descr.	133	5.5	4.3	171	7.1	4.9	37	1.5	2.0
	PW Descr.	137	5.7	3.4	201	8.4	4.8	30	1.3	2.1
	TF Narr.	123	5.1	4.7	159	6.6	6.0	36	1.5	1.9
	GW Narr.	181	7.5	6.1	262	10.9	7.5	38	1.6	1.6
HPs										
	TF Descr.	48	8	4.4	60	10	5.4	7	1.2	2.8
	PW Descr.	49	8.2	1.8	68	11.3	3.2	2	0.3	0.5
	TF Narr.	37	6.2	4.0	66	11	5.9	4	0.7	2.0
	GW Narr.	74	12.3	7.2	100	16.7	7.8	7	1.2	2.6
LPs										
	TF Descr.	21	3.5	3.2	21	3.5	2.3	15	2.5	2.3
	PW Descr.	24	4	3.7	33	5.5	4.4	7	1.2	1.5
	TF Narr.	17	2.8	2.7	22	3.7	3.6	7	1.2	0.9
	GW Narr.	18	3	3.4	29	4.8	2.5	6	1	0.8

On the whole, more finite clauses than non-finite clauses were generated in the compositions. Neither task nor classroom organization for the task seemed to have had an impact on the number of finite clauses generated, although there was some noticeable difference in the number of finite clauses generated by the HPs and the LPs. The HPs had more finite clauses in all tasks than the LPs. There was, however, very little difference between the two groups as regards the number of finite clauses. The counting of sentences was initially done irrespective of whether the sentences were simple, compound or complex. However, I later counted them on the basis of their being simple, compound or complex (see Table 7.18). As regards the latter, I looked into the number of subordinate clauses embedded in each of the complex sentences. I later ascertained how accurate or inaccurate these subordinate clauses were (see Table 7.19). Generally, the non-finite constructions which favour the formation of complex structures were very few for both groups although, strangely, the LPs had more of them than the HPs particularly in the narrative task while the HPs

had more finite clauses than the LPs in both the descriptive task and the narrative task. Since both groups had very few non-finite clauses or since both may have avoided using them for fear of making errors, it can only be concluded that non-finite clauses are too complex at Form 2 level to be employed in compositions and therefore, it is pertinent to conclude that non-finiteness was not a major contributing factor to the quality of many of the subjects' compositions. This was because even some HPs avoided using non-finite constructions and used finite ones. At Form 2 the subjects had not learnt complex grammatical structures, and since the tendency was for learners to use the linguistic resources provided them in class (apparently very few of them could be expected to be exposed to complex structures through reading at home, as English books are hardly available at home), very few tended to use non-finite constructions in their compositions. However, it might be naive to suggest that the use of non-finite structures did not contribute to the quality of the compositions for, despite many of the subjects not using these structures there were a few who used them ably. The fact that both the HPs and the LPs used few non-finite constructions only serves to highlight the fact that the subjects of this study used simple linguistic structures but does not in any way imply that non-finite structures if properly used, were not significant in showing the competence of those who did use them.

#### **7.1.4 Cohesion analysis**

Considerable attention has been paid to cohesion analysis both in the spoken mode and in the written mode ever since the publication of Halliday and Hasan's (1976) Cohesion in English. The interest shown in cohesion has brought about a revolution in the evaluation of compositions. No longer is grammar or vocabulary per se seen as an index of the quality of a composition. All elements that make a text comprehensible are seen as having a role to play in causing a composition to be evaluated as a good one or a poor one. These elements can only be regarded as playing that role successfully if what they do is to show the link between one sentence and another or within the sentences, or between one utterance and another in speech. Halliday and Hasan (1976) categorize cohesion into two broad types: grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. While the latter is concerned with a relationship between vocabulary items in a spoken or written text, the former is concerned with "semantic links between clauses and sentences in written discourse and between utterances and turns in speech" (McCarthy, 1991:34). Under grammatical cohesion are the grammatical cohesion links or devices which are: reference, ellipsis,

substitution and conjunctions. Under lexical cohesion are cohesion devices (or cohesion ties) of reiteration and collocation. I will devote the first part of the cohesion analysis of the compositions of this study to conjunctions, since these are quite frequent in both spoken and written English and are used often by elementary learners of English.

#### **7.1.4.1 Grammatical cohesion**

##### **7.1.4.1.1 Conjunctions**

Conjunctions are important in both spoken and written language because they show a link between sentences in a written text or between segments of speech in spoken discourse. In fact in spoken discourse, they tend to become so frequent that they sometimes boil down to functioning merely as markers of an interlocutor's beginning of an utterance or continuing with it. The relationship shown by conjunctions among sentences will vary depending on the type of conjunction used. Hence, a conjunction may be used to show a contrast (e.g. but, although) or clarification (and, and so, so) or reasoning (so, therefore). Halliday and Hasan (1976) provide a comprehensive categorization of conjunctions which fall into the following four groups: additive conjunctions, temporal conjunctions, adversative conjunctions and causal conjunctions. Additive conjunctions extend an idea and thus link one sentence to another (in a written text) or one turn to a previous turn (in speech). Additive conjunctions are: and, (and also) then, so, or, besides, furthermore etc..., for example:

For the whole day he climbed up the steep mountainside, almost without stopping. And in all this time he met no one. (Halliday and Hasan, 1976:238)

Temporal conjunctions depict "a relation of temporal sequence" (Halliday and Hasan, 1976:239) and would naturally be encountered in narratives. Examples of temporal conjunctions are: then, at once, next, for example:

The child first stood up and then he sat down at once and answered the teacher's question.

Conjunctions which constitute the Adversative category are: but, yet, although, however, nevertheless, and others which state something which is not anticipated or is contrary to a commonly held view as in the sentences:

He is a rich man but he isn't happy.  
Although he is a rich man he isn't happy.

The last category of conjunctions are the Causal conjunctions which state purpose, result or reason for the occurrence of an event or phenomenon. Some of the conjunctions which constitute the causal category are: by, so, then, therefore, hence, consequently, for this reason, and because; as in these examples:

The boy didn't come to school because he was sick (Reason)

He went to hospital so as to get some medicine. (Purpose)

"Today's society sets the standards. The people more or less follow it (sic). Consequently, there exists the right behavior for specific situation at hand" (Witte and Faigley, 1981:192).

#### 7.1.4.1.2 The pattern of distribution of conjunctions in the written compositions

The procedures by which the figures in the following tables were arrived at are described in 6.2.3 above (see also Appendix Y2)

Table 7.21 The number and percentage of conjunctions generated by the whole sample (N=24) and the number and percentage of conjunctions used intra-sententially and inter-sententially by the whole sample

Type	Descriptive				Narrative			
	TF	%	PW	%	TF	%	GW	%
ADDITIVE	90	78.9	77	64.7	80	64.5	114	60.3
Intrasent.	71	78.9	60	77.9	64	80	101	88.6
Intersent.	19	86	4 17	68	16	59.3	13	28.9
TEMPORAL	1	1.1	18	15.1	16	12.9	46	0.2
Intrasent.	1	100	0	0	12	66.7	7	43.7
Intersent.	0	0	12	66.7	9	33.3	20	44.4
CAUSAL	15	13.2	9	7.6	17	13.7	20	10.6
Intrasent.	12	80	8	88.9	15	88.2	10	50
Intersent.	3	13.6	1	25	2	7.4	10	22.2
ADVERSAT.	8	7	15	12.6	11	8.8	9	4.7
Intrasent.	8	100	14	93.4	11	100	7	77.8
Intersent.	0	0	1	25	0	0	2	4.4

The written compositions revealed that the most used category of conjunctions by all subjects was the additive conjunction. The most popular of these additive conjunctions were "and" and "and also". It was also clear that even among other conjunctions such as adversatives, the most commonly used were those employed in conversations such as "but" and "only". However, there was a difference in the choice of conjunctions among the HPs and the LPs especially as regards temporal conjunctions and conjunctions expressing cause or reasoning. While the LPs limited themselves to simple temporal conjunctions such as "then" and "first ...then", the HPs were able to use others such as: "at once, after that, until then", thus showing how they were able to weave the story together by using words that marked a sequence of events.

As regards causal conjunctions, only the HPs were able to employ "therefore, because, and due to" as markers of continuity of thought or argument, whereas the LPs limited themselves to the common "so" which, as in speech, did not always get used to express an argument or continuity of thought, but got used to indicate that the writer was going to state something. Most of the additives were used in the teacher fronted descriptive composition where they constituted 78.9 per cent of all conjunction categories used in the teacher -fronted descriptive task. The narrative tasks tended to generate all types of conjunctions whereas the descriptive tasks did not generate temporal and adversative conjunctions in pair work. The nature of the task thus determined the presence or absence of certain types of conjunctions. It is conceivable that since the narrative task involved explaining, stating reasons and stating events they had almost all categories of conjunctions. This was not the case with the descriptive compositions which had very few adversative and causal conjunctions as the tasks entailed stating what the subjects saw and thus involved little argument or reasoning.

Table 7.22. Number and percentage of conjunctions used by the HPs and the LPs in comparison with the whole sample across tasks

Type	Descriptive composition								Narrative composition							
	Teach.front				Pair work				Teach.front				Group work			
	Intr.	%	Inter	%	Intr.	%	Inter	%	Intr.	%	Inter	%	Intr.	%	Inter	%
<b>Additive</b>																
HPs	17	23.9	3	15.8	16	26.7	0	0	15	21.1	7	43.7	30	29.7	8	61
LPs	25	35.2	0	0	4	6.7	31	6.7	12	18.7	1	6.3	16	15.8	2	15
<b>Temporal</b>																
HPs	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	33.4	5	71.4	1	11.1	14	53.8	8	40
LPs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3.8	1	5
<b>Causal</b>																
HPs	4	33.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	40	0	0	3	30	5	0
LPs	1	8.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	10	0	0
<b>Adversative</b>																
HPs	1	2.5	0	0	0	0	0	0		9.1	0	0	1	14.3	0	0
LPs	2	25	0	0	10	71.4	1	100	5	45.5	0	0	2	28.6	0	0

As regards the use of the categories of conjunctions by the two groups of the HPs and the LPs (see Table 7.22 above), it can be said that the difference between the HPs and the LPs lay in the fact that the HPs were more capable of employing more types of conjunctions. A statistically significant difference of 62.79 (chi square analysis) was obtained (at  $df=9$ ;  $p=0.05$ ) showing the difference between the HPs and the LPs in their use of conjunctions in written compositions. Whereas the LPs used mostly additive conjunctions in their compositions, the HPs were able to employ causal and temporal conjunctions a great deal, thus displaying the fact that they could expand ideas or state reasons for what they saw. The LPs exceeded the HPs in the use of adversatives in their written compositions. However, these adversatives were more often used in the discussions to initiate a turn or to link a speaker's turn with a previous interlocutor's turn than to state something in opposition or to argue. Most of the additives were intra-sentential rather than inter-sentential (see Table 7.21). In the descriptive teacher-fronted task for example, 78.9 per cent of additives were used intra-sententially. In pair work, 77.9 of all adversatives were also used intra-sententially. All adversative conjunctions in the teacher-fronted tasks were used intra-sententially. Most of the inter-sentential conjunctions were generated by the HPs but these were mostly



additive and temporal conjunctions (see Table 7.23 below). Both groups failed to generate inter-sentential causal and adversative conjunctions, thus probably suggesting that inter-sentential conjunctions are more difficult than intra-sentential conjunctions, particularly in constructions requiring stating causes or reasons as well as arguments.

Table 7.23. Number of intra-sentential and inter-sentential conjunctions used correctly or incorrectly by the HPs and LPs across tasks.

Type	Descriptive composition						Narrative composition					
	Teach.front			Pair work			Teach.front			Group work		
	Tot.	Corr	Inc.	Tot.	Corr	Inc.	Tot.	Corr	Inc.	Tot.	Corr	Inc.
ADDIT.	48	35	13	35	24	11	42	21	21	64	23	41
Intras.	47	35	12	30	21	9	31	15	16	56	22	34
Inters.	1	0	1	5	3	2	11	6	5	8	1	7
TEMP.	1	0	1	6	0	6	5	4	1	15	9	6
Intras.	1	0	1	4	0	4	4	3	1	5	2	3
Inters.	-	-	-	2	0	2	1	1	0	10	7	3
CAUSAL	10	7	3	1	0	1	6	3	3	16	5	11
Intras.	9	7	2	-	-	-	6	5	1	6	0	6
Inters.	1	0	1	1	0	1	-	-	-	10	5	5
ADVERS.	2	2	0	6	1	5	1	1	0	3	0	3
Intras.	2	2	0	5	1	4	1	1	0	3	0	3
Inters.	-	-	-	1	0	1	1	0	1	-	-	-

The results of this study concerning the use of conjunctions do not differ markedly from those of other researchers on written or spoken discourse such as Witte and Faigley (1981); Fine (1985); and McClure and Steffensen (1985). In their studies, these authors found that the subjects used additive conjunctions most. Fine (1985) studied the use of cohesive devices among normal readers and disabled readers in oral discourse, and McClure and Steffensen (1985) conducted their study on the use of conjunctions among mainstream (advantaged) and non-mainstream (disadvantaged) children on both oral and written discourse.

McClure and Steffensen's finding was that mainstream children performed better on all types of conjunctions. However, when they analyzed the use of the conjunctions on the basis of how appropriately they expressed the relationship between clauses, they found that their subjects found it easy to use the additive

conjunction "and" and the adversative conjunction "but", though they had difficulty in using the causal conjunction "because". These researchers argue that the subjects under their study could have been constrained to use adversative conjunctions because usually children develop the concept of causality before they know how to state contrasts. What was also significant in their study was the fact that the mastery of certain types of conjunctions tended to be correlated with age. Most of their subjects were able to master all types of conjunctions by the sixth grade, except the adversative "even though". Fine (1985) on the other hand, found that apart from his subjects using the additive "and" substantially, they used it ambiguously. He offers three sentences to show how an additive marker may link a proposition but still not say much about the semantic relationship. The three examples he gives are:

- i. John went outside and he got a sunburn
- ii. John went outside. Consequently, he got a sunburn.
- iii. John went outside. Then he got a sunburn.

Although (i) could show a temporal or causal relationship, this relationship is not as clearly marked as that in (ii) and (iii). The frequent use of the additive "and" by the subjects in my study was like that of sentence (i) and was often ambiguous and reflective of the subjects' use of additives in oral discourse. As Fine (1985: 106)) states:

Conjunctions relations do not directly reflect the connections between propositions but rather are only the overt signals of such connections.

The frequent use of conjunctions may not therefore, necessarily mean that the learner is able to connect the relationships encoded in sentences. The fact that conjunctions related to causal relations may be acquired earlier than other conjunctions such as adversatives, and the fact that the subjects had not had much exposure to English, serves to explain why the subjects had fewer adversative conjunctions than conjunctions of the additive category. It is thus rather surprising that the LPs had more adversatives than even temporal or causal conjunctions. This could be attributed to two reasons. One of the reasons is the fact that some of the adversative conjunctions were haphazardly used and did not necessarily perform the function of linking ideas in sentences. They were simply used to introduce a topic or to shift to another idea. Secondly, some of the narrative compositions were written as factual descriptive accounts, thus obviating the need to use temporal conjunctions and causal conjunctions. The fact that the subjects could not form a proper judgment about whether to begin a new idea or a new sentence was also another problem as regards the subjects'

use of conjunctions and is illustrated below by a paragraph from one of the HPs compositions (Composition No. 47).

One day there was a car driven on the road. In that car at the back there was four boxes packed at the behind of the car there was a man riding a bicycle. So when the driver accelerated the motion the boxes falling down on the man's bicycle the bicycle was damaged and the driver were not realize that the boxes are falling down. So when he recognize that the boxes are falling down he stood his car and turned back to see

It can only then be said that unless the learners are good readers and have constant practice in writing, they may never know how to use conjunctions correctly. Moreover, the writing done in this exercise was not different from the writing which they do under the constraints of scheduled time and supervision from the teacher, leaving them no time to see whether the words they use create good logical propositions.

As regards the occurrence of intra-sentential and inter-sentential conjunctions, a word of caution is probably warranted here. Although the LPs were in some cases able to use more inter-sentential conjunctions than the HPs, this cannot be seen as an indication of the fact that the LPs are able to use conjunctions to relate propositions to one another. In contrast, the HPs were able to use intra-sentential conjunctions quite well. Yde and Spoelders (1990) writing on the use of intra-sentential and inter-sentential conjunctions, regard cohesion that closes boundaries between sentences (i.e. inter-sentential cohesion) as an element of lexical cohesion like reiteration and collocation, whereas intra-sentential cohesion is regarded by them as being signalled by grammatical devices. It would therefore appear that students who are able to employ inter-sentential links between one sentence and another may be regarded as capable of indicating a continuity or discontinuity of thought between or among utterances or sentences. However, since this linking of ideas can also be done by using intra-sentential conjunction, I would regard the use of inter-clausal or inter-sentential conjunctions as not all that essential at the elementary stage of language learning though they could, if used well, be an indicator of the writer's maturity of style.

Table 7.24. Total number of words and phrases expressed by each type of conjunction used by the HPs and LPs across tasks in the HPs-LPs sample

Type	High performers				Low performers			
	Descriptive		Narrative		Descriptive		Narrative	
	TF	PW	TF	GW	TF	PW	TF	GW
<b>Additive</b>								
and	17	17	22	35	20	4	14	28
and also	2	-	-	2	5	-	4	3
besides	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
or	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total Addit.	20	18	22	37	25	4	18	32
<b>Adversative</b>								
but	1	-	1	1	2	9	5	2
only	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	3
Total Advers	1	0	1	1	2	11	5	5
<b>Temporal</b>								
then	-	-	3	1	-	1	-	2
first...then	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
at once	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
soon	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
after that	-	2	-	10	-	-	-	-
until then	-	-	2	3	-	-	-	-
Total Tempor.	0	2	6	15	0	1	0	6
<b>Causal</b>								
so	3	-	2	3	2	1	2	3
therefore	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
because	1	-	2	3	1	-	-	-
due to	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	1

#### 7.1.4.1.3 Use of connectives in the conversational data

Connectives (conjunctions) are essential for organizing segments of discourse and hence relating ideas (Ehrlich, 1988). Writing on the significance of connectives, Halliday and Hasan (1976:227) regard connectives as a type of semantic relation which shows "a specific way in which what is to follow is systematically connected to what has gone before".

Generally, connectives used by the subjects of this study were used either to draw the hearer's attention and as a signal that the speaker was going to say something or was assuming a new turn. Connectives were also used when the interlocutor was shifting topic. Connectives thus served mainly to maintain the flow of the conversation apart from linking ideas or establishing a relationship between one utterance and another. This was achieved mainly in five ways:

- 1) Expansion or elaboration
- 2) Requesting information
- 3) Requesting clarification of content or form
- 4) Requesting confirmation
- 5) Reasoning, predicting or hypothesizing.

#### **7.1.4.1.3.1 Expansion or elaboration**

Expansion or elaboration using additive conjunctions occurred usually as a response to a positive evaluation which spurred on the interlocutor to continue talking as the following exchange illustrates.

0052S2: there is a man in this picture - coming from fishing

0053S1: yeah

0054S2: and near him there is -we think this boy - he saw him and then he is going for to inform his mother that their [father] is coming.

(Appendix R , Transcript xiv )

#### **7.1.4.1.3.2 Requesting information**

Requesting information led to responses which, at times, led to speakers shifting to another topic. The shift in topic was often marked by conjunctions, particularly the additive "and", as exemplified in this turn (See Transcript xi).

0018S2: when he went early in the morning- in this day -he got the fish- in the evening and he come he he start to go at home - he reach and he see the wi his wife which was sit near the fire - but - it is not making the food - and this picture/.../ there was a one house and this man is living near the lake.

Although S2 uses the conjunction "and" to link temporal events relating to the man, he soon shifts the topic as he begins to talk about the man in another picture as evidenced by his abrupt phrase " ...and this picture /.../ there was a one house and this man is living near the lake".

#### 7.1.4.1.3.3 Requesting clarification of content

Requests for clarification of content were used at the beginning of an utterance and did also involve the use of conjunctions (See Appendix R, Transcript xxiii).

0015S3: you can see the ring

0016S1: yes the ring it [got]

0017aS3: [it is already broken]

0018S1: yes already broken and so I think when /..../ it got a medicine after it got a medicine- he must a he [must]

0018aS2: [repair]

0019s2: and repair it

0020S3: but myself want to ask a question about one picture - the first picture

0021S1: which one?

0022S2: the picture about this box it belongs to whom (with a rising intonation) that boy or the /dreva/ (with a rising intonation)

0023S1: oh this box is kept in the - on the pick up van [so]

0023aS3: [but what ] but what is what is that woman but that he /?/

The word "but" seems to be serving the same function as that of fillers (words like "oh, mmh") as an indicator of a pause or a signal that the interlocutor intends to continue talking. It is also used to serve as a starter of the conversation and thus evokes some clarification from other interlocutors.

#### 7.1.4.1.3.4 Requests for confirmation

Sometimes the conjunctions like "so", were used as markers of requests for confirmation of statements rather than markers of reasoning or indication of consequence as illustrated in the following exchange (See Appendix R, Transcript x);

0058S1: so this is the five difference between picture A- the picture B (with a rising intonation)

0059S1: yes

or as framing used to request action as in the following turn (Transcript x):

0064S1: so I think we must write clearly these these five difference differences between picture A and picture B

#### 7.1.4.1.3.5 Reasoning

Conjunctions were also coupled with "I think" expressions to indicate that the interlocutor was going to offer an argument or was extending a topic as in the following turn (See Appendix R, Transcript xxv). In this exchange, students have just been arranging their ideas together to form a comprehensible story and are trying to tell a story.

0072S5: I think that's all - let us compare all our pictures

0073S3: maybe let me interrupt you Mr.(name withheld) you have something to talk because you have been keeping quiet for a long time

0074S6: yaah

0075S3: you can use this chance

0076S6: yaah when I listen to those pictures which you have explained

0077S3: [yaah]

0077aS6: I see that at my picture /dharaa/ a car which carry three boxes and I think (name withheld) you say that at your picture you see the man who took the boxes I think that - is his boxes.

0078S5: yes

0079S4: I think you are wrong because I think that these boxes (S3 and S4 laugh together) is the box of the driver drive the (.....)

0080S3: [ a car]

0080aS4: [a car] and these boxes I think that when he is going that box drops

0081S3: [drop down]

0082S4: [drop down] and this man come come back to that- car oh see that the box is down

It is apparent that in turns 0078 and 0078a, the interlocutors use the framing "yaah" to extend the talk but as they go on we find that in turns 0081; 0082; 083 and 0084, they complete and repeat each other's utterances in order to give room for expansion or elaboration of a point mentioned in the previous utterance.

The following two short paragraphs from student S6's written data reveal a few things about the subjects' use of conjunctions. In paragraph A, the conjunction "also" seems to mark a causal relationship between the first group of sentences and those that follow the "also". It might as well have been the equivalent of "therefore" or "consequently" (Composition No. 44).

- A) When the car reached at the corner, three boxes fallen down from the car, And the man who were riding the bicycle it fallen on him, Also the driver stopped the car and got out and run to the man who were damaged with boxes

In B, the writer's use of the causal conjunction "so" might appear related to the temporal conjunction "after" and the former appears intended to expand the latter. However, "so" could also mean "as a consequence" with a causal relationship being signalled (Composition No. 55)..

B) A boy tried to check his tyre and he saw his ring was not in order as usually, when the driver came which his face is very ugly, he gave some bad words for the boy and the boy was worried. After a few moments a policeman were came. One of them he tried to equalized a misunderstanding b/n a driver and the boy another policeman he continuos with his work as usually. After that the driver he gave an information about what was happened there. So driver and the boy is going to be friends.

#### 7.1.4.1.4 Substitution and ellipsis

(See also 6.2.3 above)

Substitution is the replacement of a word or phrase by another in the text. Halliday and Hasan (1976:89) give the following as an example of substitution:

My axe is too blunt. I must get a sharper one.

You think Joan already knows? - I think everybody does.

In the two examples, "one" and "does" are substitutes for "axe" and for "knows" respectively. Substitution replaces only words or phrases and not the meanings in an utterance or a text. McCarthy (1991) sees substitution devices as being learnt like idiomatic expressions and thus not being "directly translatable" to other languages. It would seem, therefore, that unless they are learnt by heart or as formulaic expressions, substitution devices pose a problem to FL learners. Substitution devices would thus tend to be acquired late, though students who read extensively may be expected to acquire them early.

Substitution may be of three types: nominal, verbal or clausal. Nominal substitution occurs when a noun headword is replaced by another word as in the first sentence above. The replaceable word may be a single plural noun or one the attribute of which is being substituted for by a word such as "so" as in the sentence: He is a famous engineer. I think his son would like to be so. A verbal substitute usually takes the position of a lexical verb and occurs in the initial position of a sentence. Halliday and Hasan (1976) give this example of verbal substitution in which the verb "do" substitutes the phrase "look after me"

Does Granny look after you everyday?

She can't do at weekends because she has to go to her own house.



Clausal substitution involves replacing an entire clause by an expression such as "so" or even a modal verb such as "will" or "can" as in the sentence:

Do you think he will come to visit us? - I think so.

He intends to finish his work next week. I am sure he will.

Halliday (1985b) regards substitution and ellipsis as variants of the same cohesive relation; their only difference being that whereas substitution involves replacing a word, ellipsis involves omitting an element or a lexical item. This difference is exemplified by Quirk et al (1985) in these two examples:

This is a fine hall. I have never lectured in a finer one.

(substitution).

This is a fine hall you have here. I have never lectured in a finer .

(ellipsis).

In the above sentences, it is clear that whereas "one" in the first sentence has been substituted for "hall"; in the second one, both the headword "hall" and any substitute like "one" have been omitted. The element omitted in ellipsis is assumed by the speaker or writer to be known by his interlocutor or reader. As in substitution, the elements that are omitted may be noun headwords (nominal ellipsis); verbal groups or clausal elements .

Table 7.25. Number and percentage of each type of cohesion tie for the whole sample across tasks.

Type of cohesion tie	Descriptive		Narrative	
	TF	PW	TF	GW
REFERENCE TIES				
Pronominals	169	127	136	231
Demonstratives	282	206	339	562
Comparatives	12	11	6	4
Total references	463	344	481	797
Percentage	59.8	55.7	55.8	61.3
REITERATION TIES				
Same item	246	215	347	461
Synonym/hyponym	16	10	10	7
Superordinate term	2	2	3	2
General word	1	0	0	5
Total reiteration	265	237	360	475
Percentage	34.3	38.4	41.8	36.6

Type of cohesion tie	Descriptive		Narrative	
	TF	PW	TF	GW
SUBSTITUTION TIES				
Nominal	12	9	3	5
Verbal	0	0	0	0
Clausal	0	1	0	0
Total substitution	12	10	3	5
Percentage	1.6	1.6	0.3	0.4
ELLIPSIS				
Nominal	27	19	13	15
Verbal	6	7	0	2
Clausal	0	0	4	5
Total ellipsis	33	26	17	22
Percentage	4.3	4.2	1.9	1.7

Results from the written compositions (see Table 7.25 above) indicate that generally, substitution cohesion represented the least of all cohesion devices. When data for the whole sample of 24 target subjects was examined, it was found that substitution constituted only 1.6 per cent of all cohesion devices used in the teacher-fronted descriptive work. In pair work, it constituted 1.6 per cent of cohesion devices and in narrative teacher-fronted and narrative group work, it constituted 0.3 per cent and 0.4 per cent of all cohesion ties respectively. The most favoured aspect of substitution was nominal substitution, indicating that subjects were able to substitute nouns but could not, at their linguistic level of competence, use verbal or clausal substitution cohesion. Most of the cohesive devices were generated in the descriptive tasks, particularly in the teacher-fronted descriptive tasks. This suggests that perhaps the students relied more on their teachers than on their peers to provide them with language resources. These language resources were apparently, exploited during pair work, which revealed the next substantial set of substitution cohesion ties.

The fact that there were more cohesion ties in descriptive compositions than in narrative compositions may be attributed to two reasons. The descriptive composition was better predisposed towards the realization of substitution cohesion because in describing and listing objects, there was a likelihood of noun substitution. Secondly, the narrative tasks being relatively longer than the descriptive tasks, involved complex structures elements of which which students

may have found too difficult to substitute. The nature of the short turns in spoken discourse and the short stretches of sentences were thus, to some extent, favorable for the generation of substitution devices as evidenced in this exchange (See Appendix R, Transcript xiv) in a discussion prior to writing a descriptive composition.

- 0023S1: a woman is cooking some food and a man is carrying - [carrying]  
 0023aS2: [carrying]  
 0024S1: carrying fish with we can say that he is coming from fishing aah and that boy -  
 on the picture- I don't know their son  
 0025S2: I think he is coming from playing  
 0026S1: yaah  
 0027S2: with his fellows now in the evening he has come for  
 0028S1: he is coming home for his dinner-and sleep I think so  
 0029S2: yaah and for me I can say that he is he has seen aah his father coming from  
 fishing so he is running to her to his mother or maybe her mother and -he is  
 saying that -aah my father is coming-he has got a fish so today we are going  
 [to enjoy ] (laughter)  
 0029aS2: [yes] yaah he is going quickly to inform [his ] mother  
 0029bS1: [and] yaah to inform his mother seem he is very happy  
 0030S2: yaah  
 0031S1: very happy (laughs) so /..5../ eeh we can conclude that is evening a man is  
 coming from fishing and a woman is cooking some food in the picture there  
 are- there is one tree- and two houses the big one with one/..../ and two [ windows]  
 0031aS2:[door ]  
 0032S1: the second one we don't know it is not shown clearly

It was apparent that in such fairly short turns, the subjects who were able to use the substitution marker "one" as in the above exchange. We see this trend in written compositions when a HP subject tries to clarify what he sees and is able to use " the one" phrase to logically substitute for a referent or noun phrase being referred to (Composition No. 1).

It is in the evening. The sun is disappear in hills. There are two people coming out of the river. One man is in front and another one is behind is carring the fish. There is one woman who is cooking. She is sitting in the small chair. There are two houses. The first one is bigger than the second one. The bigger one is in front of the smaller one.

Generally, the HPs had more substitution cohesion ties than the LPs although the difference was very small (see Table 7.26). No statistical significance was resorted to to find out the difference between HPs and LPs in the number of substitution ties because the substitution cohesion ties were very few. What can be gathered from the data is that substitution cohesion requires a good command of English since the EFL learner has to know which words are appropriate to replace the ones he has used before. Verbal and clausal substitution become even more difficult since they require extensive grammatical knowledge that enables the learner to manipulate rare grammatical expressions.

Results of the investigation of the subjects' generation of ellipsis (See Table 7.25) did not differ markedly from that of substitution cohesion. There wasn't any verbal or clausal ellipsis. Ellipsis was mainly related to nominal cohesion which constituted 75.5 per cent of all ellipsis cohesion ties. Ellipsis cohesion on the whole, constituted 4.7 per cent of all cohesion ties generated by subjects in the sample. It appears that since ellipsis involves the omission of words, the subjects of this study find it easier than substitution which involves knowing adequate grammar. Although generally, the HPs generated more ellipsis cohesion than the LPs in all tasks, the latter had more of ellipsis cohesion in the teacher-fronted descriptive task, probably because they might have picked up these structures much more easily from their teachers than their fellow students. As the descriptive task involved identifying and comparing objects, it may have made it easy for them to use structures such as "the other" instead of "the other one".

The identification of ellipsis in the transcript data revealed that generally, ellipsis cohesion tended to be manifested in long turns involving identification, clarification, elaboration or expansion of an idea mentioned in the previous turn. On other occasions, no such expansion of an idea was needed and ellipsis was realized by the interlocutor simply repeating a point. This exchange from transcript xxv ( see Appendix R, Transcript xxv ) highlights the use of nominal substitution devices.

0031S5: OK what about Mr. ...what can you see on your picture?

0032S3: Thank you Mr...on my picture I can see .four peoples eh four peoples eeh  
one carrying or is standing aside beside - at the man who have who has a  
bicycle- and those other two men - are traffic police- are traffic police are  
police and one are looking at those men - I mean the one with a bicycle and  
the one who is looking at the man who has a bicycle- I don't know.

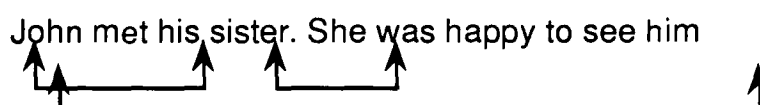
When we look at the written data, the clarification or elaboration devices used in turn 0033 are to some extent evident in this paragraph from a subject's script in which the ellipsis markers "one, the other", have been used to talk about the three people and make it easier for the reader to tell or identify the referent.

At the pictures above on the blackboard, I see it is a sunset time. I see three people. Two are men and one is a woman. Two men are coming from the lake. One man is carrying a fish and the other have no fish. The woman is cooking food.

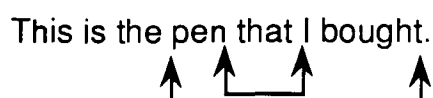
There are two houses, one is bigger and the other is small. There is a tree besides the houses and two hills. (Composition No. 33 )

#### 7.1.4.1.5 Reference cohesion

Reference cohesion is about expressions in a text or in an utterance which point to another intended element in a text or utterance for its interpretation. The common reference items in English are pronouns (he/him, his, it, they), demonstrative pronouns (this, that, those, these) and the definite article "the". In order that the text coheres, it must enable the reader to look backwards (anaphorically) or look forwards in the text (cataphorically) or even outwards from it (exophorically) to make the inferences. In anaphoric reference the information one looks for is encoded in the preceding text, e.g .



In a cataphoric reference the phrase/clause that follows has the information as in:




Exophoric reference is concerned with the identification of a referent by having recourse to the context which may not be immediate but is assumed by the writer or speaker to be part of shared knowledge as in the sentence: The economic recovery programme may take longer than anticipated; a sentence in which the writer or speaker anticipates that his readers or listeners know what the economic recovery programme is all about.

The three aspects of reference which were of special interest in this study were: pronouns, demonstratives and comparatives. Students in primary schools learn


these structures in grammar lessons, and it was expected that the students would therefore, be able to incorporate these structures in their compositions. Witte and Faigley (1981:191) provide these examples of pronominal, demonstrative and comparative references:

At home, my father is himself. He relaxes and acts in his normal manner



(Reference cohesion pronominal)

We question why they tell us to do these things. This is part of growing up.



(Reference cohesion demonstrative)

The older generation is often quick to condemn college students for being carefree and irresponsible. But those who remember their own youth do so less quickly. (Comparative)

Among the most repeated words, both in the subjects' discussion as well as their written compositions, were words that referred to the characters in the composition tasks. The subjects made frequent reference to these characters using pronouns. While a speaker may have a great choice of pronouns to refer to while having a discussion, such a choice may not necessarily be easily made by a writer who has to be explicit in writing and avoid superfluous use of pronouns if he is not to sound boring or ambiguous. In the written data, reference cohesion ties for the whole sample, constituted 59.8 per cent of all cohesion ties in the teacher-fronted composition, 55.7 per cent of all cohesion ties in pair work, 55.8 per cent of all cohesion ties in the teacher-frontal narrative task and 61.3 per cent of all cohesion ties in the narrative group work (see Table 7.25). Most of the reference ties were generated by the HPs in all composition tasks. Demonstrative reference cohesion constituted most of the reference cohesion ties, followed by pronouns. Comparative reference cohesion constituted the smallest amount of reference cohesion and was exclusively the domain of the HPs. Most of the reference cohesion was generated in the narrative task. The fact that demonstratives constituted 66.62 per cent of all reference cohesion ties in the whole sample, is illustrative of the fact that the subjects' use of written language was not much different from that of the spoken mode. This is because the use of demonstratives is to point at something that exists within the text (anaphorically or cataphorically) or outside it (exophorically). It would seem that the use of these forms is quite normal in

spoken discourse where the interlocutors have a shared knowledge of what is being alluded to when either "this" or "that" is being used. Demonstratives are thus a product of collaboration in the sense that interlocutors capitalize on their shared knowledge to talk about a referent. In written discourse, demonstratives appear to be rare lest the writer appears ambiguous. The fact that demonstratives proliferated in the subjects' compositions can be seen as a further sign of the lack of development in their knowledge of written conventions. In their study on writing, Witte and Faigley (1981) found that the high rated writers employed the third person pronoun whereas the low rated ones did not, suggesting therefore that the high rated writers were able to take into account the perspectives of their readers but the low rated writers weren't. Witte and Faigley (1981) also found that the high rated writers were able to compensate for any ambiguity arising from their use of the third person pronoun reference by elaborating. We encounter an ambiguity in the following transcript (Appendix R Transcript xx) which is a reply to the teacher about what he sees in the picture.

- 0013T: OK, that's about -all about picture number one and number four (.....)  
 Now picture number five, what can you see there? /.../ picture number five?  
 /..30../ mmh? /..8../ what can you see? /..14../ yes (with a rising intonation)
- 0014S7: I can see the man- the man the man was was driving a bicycle in his bend he is  
 bend the bicycle- and the driver who was driving away he is up /../ was- was  
 come come in front of the man who was who was behind his bicycle.

One may feel impelled to ask whether "his" is a reference to "the driver" of the bicycle or "the driver who was driving away" - apparently driving a pick up.

#### 7.1.4.2 Lexical cohesion

##### 7.1.4.2.1 Reiteration

Halliday and Hasan (1976: 278) define reiteration as

a form of lexical cohesion which involves the repetition of a lexical item, at one end of the scale; the use of a general word to refer back to a lexical item at the other end of the scale; and number of things in between - the use of synonyms, near-synonym or a superordinate.

Reiteration thus, involves not only the occurrence of the same word but any other which has more or less the same meaning or a related lexical item. This relationship can be one of a synonym, a hyponym or "relationship of inclusion"

which "organizes words into their taxonomies" (McCarthy, 1990) such as "car" which is a hyponym of "vehicle", the latter being itself a superordinate term of the former, or the use of a general word such as "item" when one might be referring to stationery. Carter (1987:73) offers these four forms of reiteration in relationship to the sentence: There's a boy climbing that tree.

The boy's going to fall (same item)

The lad's going to fall (synonym)

The child's going to fall (superordinate)

The idiot's going to fall (general word).

A foreign language learner is usually constrained by his scanty vocabulary to search for words to express his ideas. Even then, choosing a word may be one thing and using it effectively may be another. It is thus expected that a student who is able to vary the lexical items he uses and yet communicate effectively, has a fair command of the language. However, the choice of synonyms or superordinates may be a difficult one to a FL learner, since synonyms in one language may not necessarily easily transfer into another, and may sometimes be dictated by non-linguistic factors such as socio-cultural ones, which could ascribe the meaning of a word differently from how another language might.

When the spoken data was investigated, it was found that reiteration devices were formed chiefly by interlocutors repeating the words they had formed or by fellow peers taking up the words from their peers and using them to expand a point. In turn 0179 (See Appendix R, Transcript xxv) for instance, student S3 and student S6 are focusing on the word "corrugation" which student S3 uses but does not clarify. Failure by Sb to complete turn 0181 appears deliberately intended to request S3 for clarification. S3 provides the clarification, noted by his rising intonation, which probably reflects his confirming it. It is only then that S5 takes the next turn and extends the information about the boxes, using the word "corner", which now has been repeated for the third time.

0173S3: may or maybe the road has corrugated hung corrugations (laughter)

0174S6:yes (with a rising intonation)

0175Sb: there are a corner because you see that there are

0176S3: a corner eeh (with a rising intonation)

0177S5: there is a corner in front of (.....) there was a corner so at that corner- few  
boxes I mean three boxes

In turn 0102 (See Appendix R, Transcript xxv), Student S3 has been discussing about the driver whose boxes dropped off his pickup van when he was driving.



Student S6 does not seem to understand the meaning of the word "collide" and probably avoids appearing not to know the word by prompting S3 to repeat it. Student S3 ostensibly tries to explain the meaning of the word by using the verb "crash" instead. Student S5 does not, however, seem able to differentiate "collided" from "crashed" and extends the previous turn (following his interrupting Student 3), saying that the bicycle crashed the boxes.

0099cS3:I mean those [boxes]

0099dS5: [boxes]

0100S3: dropped off the car and unfortunately this man eeh coming behind the car  
collided with the boxes

0101S6: [is] (with a rising intonation)

0101aS3:[there is] a crash -[maybe the bicycle had no eeh]

0102S3: [ maybe the bicycle had no eeh]

0102aS5:[the yes - the bicycle crashed the boxes]

From these exchanges, we see one advantage of group work as an opportunity which the learners are provided with to talk freely and even interrupt each other so that they can clarify points often exploiting lexical cohesion devices. This atmosphere of collaboration and solidarity helps the learners provide each other with words and other linguistic resources which a controlled teacher-fronted lesson is rarely likely to provide. Whether the learners are able to take advantage of this support while they are writing is another issue, since writing does not involve a simplistic transfer of what is spoken into writing but involves mechanical and cognitive factors as well.

While it cannot in all cases be confirmed that what was observed in the spoken data bore directly on what the subjects wrote, it is interesting to note the parallel between the use of words and the use of synonyms in conversation and the use of these in some compositions. In the following composition for example, Student S3 in the verbal data, when writing, restates or reformulates words he has mentioned in the previous sentence thus using the word "scene" towards the end in place of the phrase "the place where the accident occurred" (Composition No. 56).

At a certain point on the road there was a corner. Unfortunately when the lorry reached at this corner three boxes fall off the lorry.

Shortly after, the man who was riding a bicycle collided with the boxes. It was a bad crash and the man fell off his bicycle. The driver of the lorry saw the accident so he came out of his lorry and he went at the place where the accident occurred. When this accident occurred there were traffic policemen

around. So they went at the scene and wrote about what was the cause of that accident. (Composition No )

As indicated by the results of this study, reiteration cohesion was next to reference cohesion in terms of cohesion ties generated (see Table 7.25). All reiteration ties in all tasks, constituted 37.66 per cent of all cohesion ties in the whole sample (N=24). The repetition of the same items formed 94.9 per cent of all reiteration ties whereas the use of synonyms constituted only 3.22 per cent of all reiteration cohesion. The use of superordinate reiteration ties constituted only 0.67 per cent of all reiteration ties and the use of general words formed only 0.45 per cent.

When these results were related to the performance of the HPs and the LPs, it was found that low performers had more reiteration ties in descriptive composition tasks whereas the HPs had more of this type of cohesion in narrative tasks (see Table 7.26 below). The LPS had 23.4 per cent and 25.3 of all reiteration cohesion used by the whole sample (N=24) for the teacher-fronted descriptive composition and pair work descriptive composition respectively, compared to the HPs who had 19.6 per cent of reiterations for the descriptive task and 25.3 for the narrative task. The HPs had more reiterations for both the teacher-fronted and group work narrative than the LPs, having 46.4 per cent and 19.9 per cent of all reiteration ties in the narrative teacher-fronted and narrative group work respectively, compared to 13.7 per cent and 7.8 per cent of the LPs.

These results can only be judiciously interpreted if we bear in mind that the HPs had somewhat longer narrative compositions than the LPs and if we also take into account the nature of the two tasks. The descriptive task involved mostly writing down what was seen, and there was a tendency for the LPs to repeat the same words because they lacked alternative vocabulary to express themselves. Why then did the HPs show a tendency of repeating themselves more often than the LPs? It can only be guessed that because the HPs had longer narrative compositions than the LPs, they repeated the words they had used in previous sentences to refer to events. It is apparent that the longer the text was, the more were the reiterations. As they had more synonyms than the LPs, the HPs might be expected to generate a variety of words but they may have failed to do so because they got involved in explaining and thus were not able to remember all the words they had to use to create some variety in the text.

Table 7.26. Number and percentage of each type of cohesion tie for the High performers (HPs;N=6) and Low performers (LPs;N=6)) across tasks

Type of cohesion tie	High performers				Low performers			
	Descriptive		Narrative		Descriptive		Narrative	
	TF	PW	TF	GW	TF	PW	TF	GW
<b>REFERENCE TIES</b>								
Pronominals	27	44	46	73	26	19	19	43
Demonstrative	67	67	134	178	68	33	51	90
Comparative	5	4	1	0	1	0	0	0
Total reference	99	115	181	251	95	52	70	133
Percentage	21.4	33.4	37.6	31.5	20.5	15.1	14.5	16.7
<b>REITERATION TIES</b>								
Same word	45	44	117	154	59	60	64	62
Synonym/hyponym	7	6	5	1	3	0	1	0
Superordinate	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
General word	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
Total reiteration	52	50	62	60	123	159	66	62
Percentage	19.6	21.1	46.4	19.9	23.4	25.3	13.7	7.8
<b>SUBSTITUTION TIES</b>								
Nominal	5	5	2	2	0	2	0	0
Verbal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clausal	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
Total substitution	5	5	2	2	0	2	0	0
Percentage	41.7	50	66.7	40	0	0	0	0
<b>ELLIPSIS TIES</b>								
Nominal	5	6	4	6	8	2	2	3
Verbal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clausal	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
Total ellipsis	5	6	4	8	8	2	2	4
Percentage	15.1	23.1	23.5	36.4	24.2	7.7	11.7	18

Table 7.27. Number of correctly and incorrectly used cohesion ties among High Performers (N=6)

Type of cohesion	Descriptive composition		Narrative composition	
	Teach.front	Pair work	Teach.front	Group work

	Corr.	Inc.	Corr.	Inc.	Corr.	Inc.	Corr.	Inc.
REFERENCE	96	2	107	8	170	10	234	17
Personal pronouns	27	0	40	4	54	4	63	10
Demonstratives	65	2	65	2	128	6	171	7
Comparatives	4	0	3	1	0	1	0	0
REITERATION	50	2	48	2	112	11	143	15
Same word	43	2	42	2	106	11	139	15
Synonym/hyponym	7	0	6	0	5	0	2	0
Superordinate term	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
General word	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
SUBSTITUTION	5	0	5	0	2	1	2	1
Nominal	5	0	5	0	2	0	2	0
Verbal	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Clausal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ELLIPSIS	5	0	6	0	1	0	3	0
Nominal	5	0	6	6	1	0	3	0
Verbal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clausal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 7.28. Number of correctly and incorrectly used cohesion ties among Low performers (N=6) across tasks

Type of cohesion	Descriptive composition				Narrative composition			
	Teach.front Corr.	Teach.front Incorr.	Pair work Corr.	Pair work Incorr.	Teach.front Corr.	Teach.front Incorr.	Group work Corr.	Group work Incorr.
REFERENCE	71	24	49	11	51	19	73	60
Personal pronoun	12	14	13	6	9	10	6	37
Demonstratives	59	9	46	2	42	9	67	23
Comparatives	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0
REITERATION	54	9	45	16	47	19	59	33
Same word	51	8	50	10	45	19	59	33
Synonym/hyponym	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
General word	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Type of cohesion	Descriptive composition				Narrative composition			
	Teach.front Corr.	Teach.front Incorr.	Pair work Corr.	Pair work Incorr.	Teach.front Corr.	Teach.front Incorr.	Group work Corr.	Group work Incorr.
SUBSTITUTION	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Nominal	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0

Verbal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clausal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ELLIPSIS	8	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
Nominal	8	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
Verbal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clausal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

#### **7.1.4.3 Use of cohesion devices and their relationship to students' performance**

Having mentioned the pattern of distribution of cohesion devices in both the written data and the oral data, I now would like to mention briefly the accuracy of use of the cohesion devices (See table 7.28 above) and attempt to show whether there is any link between the use of these devices and the students' scores in compositions. A caveat is probably called for before mentioning this. Firstly, measuring the accuracy of linguistic devices used in two different genres casts a shadow of doubt on the measurement since cohesion devices used in two different genres may not be the same in kind or in quantity. Secondly, because the two tasks differed in the number of cohesion devices generated, comparing them numerically may not seem sound. However, suffice it to say here that each cohesion item will be looked into on its own merits first and then compared to others only if it manifests certain common features with them. A Pearson product moment correlation was ascertained for each cohesion at .01 significant level (see Tables 7.29 and 7.30 below) to ascertain the relationship between the type of cohesion employed and the score obtained for each task for the high performers (N=6). The correlation results indicated a significant relationship in the following:

There was a significant correlation between the use of additive conjunctions and narrative group work; and a significant relationship between the use of adversatives and teacher-fronted narrative task and narrative group work. No significant relationship was revealed between the use of additives and descriptive composition (both teacher fronted and group work) nor was there any relationship between the quantity of additives and the HP subjects' performance in the teacher-fronted narrative task (See Table 7.29 below). The causal conjunctions revealed this relationship in the teacher-fronted descriptive and narrative tasks but this relationship was not revealed in the pair work descriptive task nor in group work narrative. thus showing that the subjects were unable to use these devices to argue or present points of view when they were

on their own in pairs or groups. Similarly, the fact that adversative conjunctions (but, although, however, etc...) are likely to be generated in teacher-fronted and group work tasks rather than in pair work, casts further doubt on the usefulness of pair work for problem solving particularly among low proficient language learners. Adversative conjunctions are employed in comparing or providing contrasts or differing points of view, and it would appear that those who are not able to argue or provide reasons for their answers ,fail to incorporate these structures in their talk.

The cohesion devices revealed that there was a significant relationship between the composition scores and reference cohesion in the teacher-fronted descriptive composition, and group work narrative (See Table 7.30 below). Substitution cohesion revealed a significant relationship with all tasks except the teacher fronted descriptive composition. Ellipsis evinced no relationship in use with any task except the narrative teacher-fronted task. It appears that ellipsis requires a fairly good knowledge of English and could therefore not be readily used by the subjects. Reiteration cohesion, on the other hand, revealed a significant relationship between its use and the students' score in the teacher-fronted descriptive task and the narrative group work. This was not surprising in view of the subjects' repetition of lexical items in both their transcripts and the compositions. It should be stressed, however, that the positive correlations in many cases was quite small.

Table 7.29. Correlation between types of conjunction cohesion and the HPs composition scores (at .01 level of significance)

Type	Descriptive		Narrative	
	TF	PW	TF	GW
Additive	-0.4385	-0.4170	-0.8378	0.0944
Temporal	-0.0000	-0.4470	0.4792	0.5103
Causal	0.2785	-0.4472	0.0000	-0.6250
Adversative	-0.1961	-	0.2988	0.6325

Table 7.30. Correlation between cohesion devices and the HPs composition scores (at .01 level of significance)

Type	Descriptive		Narrative	
	TF	PW	TF	GW

Reference	0.7439	-0.0799	-0.8307	0.8660
Substitution	-0.1961	0.8047	0.4879	0.5833
Ellipsis	-0.6864	-0.0596	0.1597	-0.2500
Reiteration	0.5037	-0.2828	-0.8307	0.9606

The following may therefore, be said to be the general findings on cohesion analysis and syntactical analysis:

a) In this study, the subjects generally failed to use causal, temporal and adversative conjunctions because most of the subjects' texts were incoherent in this regard. The type of cohesion devices the subjects found easy to use were the additive conjunctions which they also used in their discussions. In other words, the written scripts were replete with cohesion devices which are more germane to oral discourse than written discourse. The appearance of such additive devices in the oral language of the pupils cannot be said to have helped them much in organizing sentences in their compositions.

(b) There is a relationship between the syntactical and lexical features which the pupils verbalize and the features which they incorporate in their writing but this relationship does not give rise to any improvement in written texts since most of these cohesion devices, particularly temporal, causal and adversative conjunctions, get wrongly used or do not get used to organize the discourse and make the pupil's text cohere. In other words, pupils use cohesive devices but the presence of such devices does not necessarily mean that their texts will be coherent. In Table 7.24, for example, it can be seen that the LPs had a good number of adversative conjunctions: but, only in pair work, but these were wrongly used, thus reinforcing the fact that what matters is not the frequency of cohesion ties but how they are employed for communicative purposes

(c) There is a clear relationship between the lack of reasoning and clarification in the pupils' compositions, as exemplified by the dearth of causal and temporal conjunctions, and the lack of clarification request speech acts, expansions and elaborations and reasoning acts.

(d) There is a clear relationship between the nature of the tasks and the language features manifested as shown by the prevalence of locative expressions and existential expressions, mostly in tasks in which questions and answers predominate (Teacher-pupil interactions and pair work), and the presence of more cohesion items in the narrative task than in the descriptive task since the former gave more scope for interactions than the latter.

(e) The fact that conjunctions which relate to providing reasons for consequences or elaborating (the causal and adversative conjunctions) were more related to teacher-fronted and group work rather than pair work, could suggest that low proficiency pupils need more support in either teacher-fronted work or groups than in pairs, since when two low performers are paired together, they are unable to sustain any discussion.

(f) Cohesion analysis as a measure of the quality of writing, may not be appropriate for low proficiency or elementary writers whose texts often seem too incoherent to be analyzable.

The Halliday and Hasan (1976) model for the analysis of cohesion, while appropriate, does not tell us whether the composition is too bad to deserve being measured by any specified unit of measurement or analysis, but is simply a model we use to look into the linguistic features employed. The fact that the analysis failed to establish that learners were able to use a variety of cohesion ties, does not in any way invalidate the Halliday and Hasan model which is so far probably the best alternative to the 'traditional' models that attempt to measure writing quality by resorting to structural analysis. However, the analysis could be said to be more suited for the analysis of advanced or highly proficient writers than low proficiency writers (Jafarpur 1991) and probably much more suitable for expository writing rather than descriptive or narrative writing which does not yield a substantial variety of words or language features. More research on the cohesion analysis of low proficiency writers' compositions may help to confirm or disconfirm my experience.

Cohesion cannot, however, be taken as the sole measure of the quality of writing. A paragraph may have correctly used cohesion ties but it may all the same be found to have sentences which do not cohere. One has thus, to look beyond the quantifiable measure of cohesive devices to see what makes a composition readable and comprehensible. Mosenthal and Tierney (1984) for instance, argue that the quantity of cohesive ties does not necessarily ensure ease of comprehension and that one has to look into the cognitive features which establish that relationship rather than look at the relationship established as an end in itself. One of these cognitive features would be the coherence established within the text by the cohesive ties. How ideas are planned and organized before writing and how far these cohesive ties help in logically organizing these ideas, could be as crucial as knowing which linguistic devices to employ to make the organizing of ideas and relationship known. This might



entail going beyond the text and into the reader's domain of knowledge so as to assess whether what the writer writes, expresses that which he thinks is known to his readers. It is only when the cohesion devices we employ make the text cohere that they will serve the communication purpose for which they are intended.

One would have expected, therefore, that I should have resorted to devising a measure of coherence to supplement the cohesion data. Khalil (1989) for example, in examining the quality of writing among his Arab speaking sample, not only counted the cohesive ties used but also determined how coherent the compositions were. The measure used by the author was based on Grice's (1975) maxims of coherence, although it is not mentioned by Khalil (1989) how easy or difficult it was to evaluate coherence on the basis of Grice's maxims. Coherence is a rather complex unquantifiable measure that could involve delving into such issues as the informativeness of the text, the quality of ideas and other complex rhetorical issues that would, probably not be discernible in the compositions of such elementary writers as the subjects of my study. It was on the basis of this that coherence was not evaluated quantitatively although some measure of coherence was certainly taken into account when evaluating and marking the students' compositions that were used as data for this study.

## **7.2 Qualitative analysis of the data**

### **7.2.1 Findings from questionnaires and interviews on the impact of discussions on the writing of compositions**

The analysis of questionnaires constituted another significant contribution to the understanding of the results of the study (See Appendices S1, S2 and T ). Since the questionnaires were based on the assumptions of the study, I will discuss the results of the questionnaire data on the basis of those assumptions.

Table 7.31. Number and percentage of students' responses (Sample = 24) on discussions and the modality of discussions prior to writing.

Item	Question	Responses				
		V.O	OFT.	SOM.	RA.	N
1.	Do you have a class discussion with your teacher before each student writes a composition on his own?	12 (50%)	3 (12.5%)	5 (20.8%)	4 (16.7%)	0 (0%)
3	Are you allowed by your teacher to write a composition of your own choice?	3 (12.5%)	1 (4.2%)	6 (25%)	5 (20.8%)	9 (37.5%)
4.	Does your teacher help shy students to talk?	6 (25%)	10 (41.6%)	3 (12.5%)	4 (16.6%)	1 (4.2%)
5.	How often do you work together with other students as a group in English lessons?	6 (25%)	7 (29.2%)	3 (12.5%)	6 (25%)	2 (8.3%)
6.	Do you discuss a composition in a group before each student writes it?	8 (33.3%)	3 (12.5%)	4 (16.6%)	3 (12.5%)	4 (16.6%)
7.	Do you write a single/joint composition as a pair of group with your classmates?	1 (4.2%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.2%)	1 (4.2%)	19 (79.2%)
8.	Do you discuss words and expressions to be used in the composition before each writes his own composition?	1 (4.2%)	10 (41.6%)	2 (8.3%)	3 (12.5%)	6 (25%)

**Key**

V.O	Very often
OFT	Often
SOM	Sometimes
RA	Rarely
N	Never

Table 7.32. Frequency of Teachers' responses (Sample= 4) on pupils' discussions prior to writing

Item	Statement	Responses				
		V.O	OFT	SOM	RA	N
1.	I give some topics to pupils and ask them to write on one of them.	0	1	3	0	0
2.	I give a topic and provide an example of how the composition should be done	2	1	1	10	0
3.	I give a topic and discuss it with the class before they write about it	1	3	0	0	0
4.	I let my pupils write narratives or stories	0	2	0	2	0
5.	I let my pupils write descriptive compositions					
6.	I give my pupils argumentative compositions (writing to provide ideas in support of or against a point, writing to persuade or convince)	0	0	1	3	0
7.	I give my pupils compositions that make them correspond with others e.g. letter writing, minutes of meeting, reports and memorandum.	0	1	1	2	0
8.	I let my pupils write expository compositions (to provide facts and explanations)	0	2	1	1	0
9.	I give a topic and let students discuss it in a group before each writes about it on his own	0	2	1	0	1
10	I give my pupils models (examples) of the various compositions before they write them	0	1	2	0	1

The first eight questions in the students' questionnaire (See Table 7.31), were based on whether or not, the subjects held discussions, and therefore, interacted before writing their compositions. 62.5 per cent of the whole sample (N=24) agreed that they had discussion with the teacher prior to writing their compositions. Five students (i.e 20.8 per cent) felt uncertain and only four of them (i.e 16.6 per cent of the sample) disagreed. However, when the respondents were asked if their teachers ever wrote on board useful expressions which the students could use before writing compositions, less than half the number of respondents (9 respondents or 37.4 per cent of the sample ) agreed that they did. No statistical significance was sought to ascertain the difference in the responses as the sample was very small.

It would appear in this context that discussion to the teachers meant merely saying something to the students and not helping them with cue words and expressions which could help the students to write. In fact when the teachers were asked the same questions (See Table 7.32), 3 out of the 4 teachers who answered the questionnaire, claimed that they gave the pupils examples on how to write compositions. The response might either contradict what the students said or might be interpreted to mean that the examples were simply verbally given. It could also mean that the idea of discussing compositions was not all that clear to either the teacher or students. It might have been unclear to teachers for example, whether or not a discussion should be followed by written examples and pupils might also be unsure to what extent a discussion should be conducted to help them. All this is, apparently, a reflection of the lack of clarity about what collaborative learning, which is rarely practised in schools, should entail and the extent to which it should be carried out. There are no clear guidelines on this in the same way as topics are stipulated in the syllabus and to most teachers, collaborative learning ends with reading comprehension exercises which involve multiple choice questions.

Table 7.33. Frequency in number and percentage, of students' responses on the speech acts engaged in in discussions prior to writing compositions.

Item	Statement	Responses				
		V.O	OFT	SOM	RA	N
13	While we are discussing a composition, some of us propose points for the composition while others select words and expressions to be used.	1 (4.2%)	3 (12.5%)	1 (4.2%)	5 (20.8%)	12 (50%)
14	When I am writing to describe something, I first think of words to use to describe it clearly.	18 (75%)	3 (12.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.2%)
15	When we are writing to describe something, each member of the group explains first what he sees	13 (54.2%)	3 (12.5%)	2 (8.3%)	2 (8.3%)	2 (8.3%)
16	As I am writing my composition, I add details that I may have overlooked in the discussion	8 (33.3%)	6 (25%)	3 (12.5%)	2 (8.3%)	3 (8.3%)
17	I can remember all the points discussed in a group when I am writing my composition	5 (20.8%)	9	5 (20.8%)	1 (4.2%)	2 (8.3%)

Item	Statement	Responses				
		V.O	OFT	SOM	RA	N
18	Members of a group decide on the order of ideas to include in their composition before each starts to write	9 (37.5%)	3 (12.5%)	4 (16.6%)	3 (12.5%)	3 (12.5%)
19	Members of a group repeat points raised in the discussion before each writes on his own	7 (29.2%)	6 (25%)	1 (4.2%)	3 (12.5%)	4 (16.6%)
20	We pay little attention to the order of ideas when describing a place or something (e.g a picture)	5 (20.8%)	1 (4.2%)	3 (12.5%)	2 (8.3%)	10 41.6%)

Table 7.34. Frequency of Teachers' responses on speech acts/activities engaged in by pupils in discussions prior to writing.

Item	Statement	Responses				
		V.O	OFT	SOM	RA	N
11	Group members take turns to check what the secretary has written down	0	1	2	0	1
12	The secretary of the group reads out what he has written down to the group	1	1	1	0	1
13	Group members listen to a peer's contribution	0	3	0	0	1
14	A group member may criticize another member of the group	0	1	2	0	1
15	A group member clarifies what another member of the group may have said	0	3	0	0	1
16	Group members request teacher's help	0	2	1	1	0
17	Group members ask the teacher to clarify the accuracy of what they have written down.	1	2	1	0	0
18	Members of the group point out errors to one another.	0	1	1	1	1

Item	Statement	Responses				
		V.O	OFT	SOM	RA	N
19	Group members who note mistakes tell the secretary to correct them immediately.	0	1	2	0	1
20	One member of the group says what is to be written down.	0	2	0	0	2

The issue of the modality of discussing the composition, as well as the communicative acts (speech acts) they thought they engaged in while discussing, was expected to elicit responses which could explain how the discussion affected the pupils' writing. A few questions (Questions 13-20; See Table 7.33) were directed towards that goal. Respondents did, for instance, agree (13 respondents i.e 54.2 per cent of the sample) that they resorted to repeating points raised in discussions as a strategy of remembering what was discussed (see Item 19). Since pupils may not easily perceive the process they undertake as they discuss compositions, teachers were asked such questions as whether group members praised or criticized each other, whether members clarified other members' statements and whether they requested confirmation of the accuracy of what they wrote (see Table 7.34 and Appendix U). It is interesting to note that although teachers stated that they could not confirm whether pupils praised or criticized one another, three out of the four teachers interviewed agreed that the pupils did clarify each other's points. I find it rather bewildering that students should be able to clarify what they said and yet not be able to challenge each other on what they had failed to clarify. It is possible that the teachers were simply trying to show that their pupils did know something after all.

Table 7.35. Students' views on the impact of the Teachers' feedback on the students' writing.

Item	Interview question	Response	Frequency of response	
			No.	Percentage
2.	Do you ever discuss an English composition with your teacher before doing it?	Yes	6	66.7
		No	8	33.3
		Don't know	0	0
3.	Could you let me know if your teacher explains to you words to use in your composition before you write it.	Yes	9	37.5
		No	13	54.2
		Don't know	2	8.3
4	Do you find the oral expressions which the teacher uses in the classroom helpful enough for you to write a composition?	Helpful as I use them	15	62.5
		Helpful only to a small extent	6	25
		Helpful but I add my own words	1	4.2
		Not useful at all	2	8.3

Table 7.36. Frequency of teachers' responses on the impact of Teachers' feedback on the pupils' writing of compositions

Item	Interview question	Response	Frequency of response
3	Do you find it important to discuss a composition with your pupils first before they do it?	Yes	4
		No	0
		Don't know	0
4	Do you explain to your pupils the words they need to use when writing compositions?	I do	2
		I rarely do	1
		I do but only if it is a guide comp.	
5	Are your pupils able to incorporate the expressions you use while teaching into their compositions?	I do	
		I do but only if it is a guided comp.	
5	Are your pupils able to incorporate the expressions you use while teaching into their compositions?	A good number are able to do so	1
		Only the bright ones can	3

Item	Interview question	Response	Frequency of response
6	Does the way you respond to your pupils in class affect the way they write their compositions?	Some are able to use my own expressions in their compositions	1
		Sometimes they use my expressions even though they may not be directly related to the composition	1
		The way I repeat words and sentences to them and correct their errors affects the pupils	1
		It depends on how the pupils understand	1
7	How often are your pupils able to contribute ideas when you are teaching them how to write?	Several times	3
		Rarely	1

Since it was envisaged that the language generated in the prior discussion would be observable in the written compositions, a few questions were administered to both teachers and pupils on the impact the respondents thought the discussions had on their writing as well as the impact which the interactions had on the different composition tasks. The decision to use interviews was made so that respondents could feel more free to express their points of view. The student respondents were first asked about the oral feedback they get from their teachers and, afterwards, about the feedback they got from their fellow pupils and asked what impact, if any, this feedback had on their writing (See Table 7.35). Fifteen students (i.e 62.5 per cent of the sample) replied that they found expressions used by the teachers useful, while only 6 respondents (i.e 25 per cent of the sample) said they found them helpful only to a small extent. Two respondents (8.3 per cent of the whole sample) stated that they did not find them useful at all. When teachers were asked whether they thought their pupils were able to incorporate the expressions teachers used into their compositions (see Table 7.36), only one teacher agreed, while three others stated that only bright students were able to do so. Again, when asked whether their students were affected by the way the teachers responded to their compositions, the teachers gave varied responses. The responses were collapsed into four main ideas, each idea having been individually expressed by each teacher. While only one teacher expressed some reservations, claiming that the students' success in incorporating the teachers' expressions depended on how they understood the teacher, others claimed that their



expressions did help the students to write. When students were asked about how they thought pair work or group work interactions helped them subsequently in writing, 5 respondents (i.e 20.8 of the students' sample) claimed they incorporated in their written compositions the exact expressions they used in discussions prior to writing. Ten respondents (i.e 41.6 per cent of the sample) stated that they incorporated expressions of their own, whereas 9 respondents (i.e 37.6 per cent of the sample) stated that they could incorporate only a few of the teachers' expressions. Only one respondent stated that although he could remember the words, he needed to simplify them when writing.

The results of whether the students benefit from the expressions and language they use in discussions are, therefore, as ambiguous as they are many. I felt that perhaps it was premature to ask them these questions because rather than give responses on the basis of their day-to-day experiences, the subjects tended to base their answers on the results of the exercises they had been doing with me during the field work. This was understandable, however, given the fact that they did very little group work with their teachers. Hence, I felt their experience was too short for them to offer these remarks as generalizations.

\*Table 7.37. Frequency in number and percentage of Student's views on the speech acts employed during pair work/group work

Item	Interview question	Response	Frequency of response	
			No.	%
5.	Do you understand what your friend(s) say(s) to you in pair/group much better than you do your teacher? Please explain	I understand the teacher much better	15	62.5
		I understand my friends in the group better.	9	37.5
6.	Will you now tell me whether discussing a composition with your friends helps to write it well.	Helps much	14	58.3
		Helps only a little	8	33.3
		Doesn't help at all	2	8.4
7.	Can you tell me how your friends help you to clarify points in a discussion	They explain meanings of new words	7	29.2
		They repeat words	7	29.2
		They simplify a point	10	41.6

Item	Interview question	Response	Frequency of response	
			No.	%
8.	Can you tell me again how elaborating a point or a word prior to writing helps you to write clearly	Helps to provide new ideas	2	8.4
		Helps to correct wrong words	10	41.6
		Helps to make the language simple	12	50.0
9.	Are the explanations you get from your pair/group member about the meanings of words or about the points you need to include in your composition?	Meanings of words	13	54.2
		Ideas (points)	11	45.8

The teachers' views on these points have been to a great extent covered in the Teachers' Questionnaire schedule in Table 7.36 and Appendix T, and and will, therefore not be repeated here.

I felt that questions on how students went about discussing their compositions might cast some light on the interactional patterns they engaged in for the descriptive composition task and the narrative composition task. The students were thus asked how they clarified points in discussions (See Table 7.37 above). The students did, for instance, point out that clarifying points in a discussion made colleagues in pairs or groups explain meanings of new words. Seven respondents (i.e. 29.2 per cent of the sample) stated that clarification was arrived at by repeating words that had been said previously, whereas 10 respondents (i.e. 41.6 per cent of the sample) said that clarification was arrived at by pair work or group work members simplifying a point, an idea or a word. It was interesting, however, that when the respondents were asked about whether the explanations they got from pair or group members were about words or about points needed to include in compositions, a majority of them - 13 respondents (i.e. 54.2 per cent of the whole sample) replied that the explanations offered were about the meanings of words. Eleven respondents (i.e. 45.8 per cent of the whole sample) stated that the explanations given were about points or ideas. Judging from the paucity of the explanations and, particularly, elaborations, I tend to agree with the respondents who state that the explanations were about words, since learners at this stage - and in line with the language teaching methodology they are subjected to - regard a knowledge of the meanings of words as paramount and a prerequisite to understanding the language. The last but one part of the analysis of questionnaires and interviews will now be devoted to how teachers and students thought that the interactional

features elicited in discussions, would affect the different writing tasks. I will begin my analysis first, with the interview schedule of the teachers and students and then move on to the questionnaires.

### 7.2.2 Findings from interviews and questionnaires on the writing tasks (descriptive and narrative compositions)

Table 7.38. Frequency in number and percentage of Students' views on the impact of discussions on the descriptive and the narrative genres

Item	Interview question	Response	Frequency of response	
			No.	%
10	Do you learn many new words when you are describing something (descriptive composition) or when you are telling a story?	When describing	7	29.2
		When telling a story	15	62.5
		Don't know	2	18.3
13	Do you find yourself having much to discuss when you are writing what happened (a story) or when writing to describe something?	When writing a story	14	58.3
		When writing to describe	9	37.5
		Don't know	1	4.2
15	Which composition involves member of a pair/group repeating a point before another is able to understand?	Descriptive	17	70.8
		Narrative	7	29.2
17	Do you discuss a story composition in the same way as you do one involving describing something	*Differently	15	62.5
		*Same way	5	20.8
		*Don't know	4	16.7
18	For which type of composition do you spend a lot of time planning before you write?	Descriptive composition	9	37.5
		Narrative composition	13	54.2
		Don't know	2	8.3

\* Different answers were given for each of the responses though the answers were collapsed into the "Differently, Same way, Don't know" categories.

Table 7.39 Frequency in number and percentage (following the Questionnaire design), of the pupils responses (N=24) on the writing of descriptive and narrative compositions.

Item	Statement	Frequency of responses				
		SA	AG	UN	DIS	SDIS
22.	When I am writing to describe something, I can learn many new words.	14 58.3	8 33.3	1 4.2	0 0	1 4.2
23.	When I am writing to explain what happened, I tend to ask the teacher fewer questions than when I fill in words in blank spaces in a paragraph	3 12.5	7 29.2	4 16.6	6 25	4 16.6
24	I learn to use words I have learned more in a free composition than when I fill in words in blank spaces	15 62.5	8 33.3	1 4.2	0 0	0 0
25.	Writing to express personal feelings or experiences is difficult	2 8.3	8 33.3	2 8.3	7 29.2	5 20.8
26.	I find it easy to describe a process or an experiment	8 33.3	9 37.5	5 20.8	2 8.3	0 0
27.	Writing to provide an argument , to convince or to persuade is difficult	3 12.5	6 25	3 12.5	8 33.3	3 12.5
28.	It is easy to write giving facts or explanations about something e.g.. marriage traditions in my district.	12 50	9 37.5	2 8.3	1 4.2	0 0
29.	Writing to correspond with others (letters,minutes memorandum, reports etc...) is difficult	2 8.3	5 20.8	6 25	6 25	5 20.8
30.	We spend more time discussing a topic we all know about than one which only a few know about	10 41.6	7 29.2	2 8.3	1 4.2	3 12.5
31.	We have longer discussions when we are describing something than when we are telling a story	11 45.8	8 33.3	3 12.5	0 0	1 4.2
32.	Discussions that last a long time make us improve in expressing ourselves	18 75	2 8.3	1 4.2	0 0	0 0
33.	If you know only a little English, all types of compositions will be difficult to discuss	17 70.8	2 8.3	2 8.3	0 0	0 0

**Key.**

SA	Strongly Agree
A	Agree
UN	Uncertain
DIS	Disagree
SDIS	Strongly Disagree

Table 7.40. Frequency of Teachers' responses on the impact of discussions on the different genres (descriptive and narrative compositions) in the interview schedule

Item	Interview question	Response	No. of responses
16.	For which composition do your pupils contribute a lot of ideas?	Descriptive composition Narrative composition	1 3
17.	For which composition do your pupils seem to lack enough vocabulary to express themselves?	Descriptive composition Narrative composition	3 1
18.	Which composition, do you think, involve your pupils much planning before they write it ?	Descriptive composition Narrative composition	1 3

Table 7.41. Teachers' responses on the impact of discussions on the different genres (descriptive and narrative compositions) in the questionnaire schedule

Item	Statement	Frequency of responses				
		SA	AG	UN	DIS	SDIS
30.	Composition topics for narratives (such as writing on one's past experience), tends to engage pupils in longer discussions than descriptions	0	3	1	0	0
	It is the lack of knowledge of the subject of the composition rather than the language needed to express it, that prevents pupils from writing a good composition	1	0	3	0	0
34.	Narratives (writing to tell a story, express feeling or experience) involves students in a lot of discussion	0	3	1	0	0
35.	Students engage in only a little discussion when they are writing to describe a character, a scene or a process (descriptive composition)	1	2	1	0	0
36.	Argumentative writing (writing to provide ideas in support of or against something; writing to persuade or convince) makes it difficult for pupils to engage in a discussion	1	3	0	0	0
37.	Students tend to have a lot to discuss when they are writing to correspond with others (letter writing, minutes of a meeting, memorandum, reports etc...)	0	3	1	0	0
38.	Students tend to have no points at all to discuss when writing to provide facts and explanations about something (expository writing)	0	0	3	1	0

In the first place, the students were asked to what extent they benefited from a discussion on the writing of a descriptive composition and to what extent they

did this while discussing a narrative composition. The results from the interview schedule (See Table 7.38 and Appendix U) indicate that more than half the number of respondents - 15 respondents (i.e 62.5 per cent of the whole sample) thought that they acquired some more vocabulary from narratives; only 7 respondents (i.e 29.2 per cent of the whole sample) thought they acquired new vocabulary from descriptive compositions while 2 respondents (i.e 18.3 per cent) stated that they did not know. The main reason given for the response was that there are many more things to talk about in a story than there are in a descriptive composition.

This view accords with their responses to Question 13 when the subjects were asked about the extent to which they discussed the descriptive and narrative tasks. More than half of the respondents (14 respondents -i.e 58.3 per cent of all respondents) felt they had much to discuss in a story compared to 9 respondents (i.e 37.5 per cent of the sample) who felt that they had much to discuss when describing something. Few students were able to give reasons for this. However, those who did, argued that it is easy to describe something "because you see it" (my personal communication with one of the student respondents during interviews), while others stated that a narrative was difficult to discuss because "you have to spend much time talking to your friend before knowing what the story is about". Likewise, when they were asked about whether they discussed a narrative composition in the same way as they did one involving describing something, 15 respondents (i.e 62.5 per cent of the whole sample) said they discuss them differently while only 5 (i.e 20.8 per cent of the sample) stated that they did not see any difference in the way they discussed them. The view given about this was that in describing you give facts in a few words, whereas in a narrative composition you think things out and talk about many ideas. The responses about the narrative being difficult because "you think out ideas" is interesting because it shows the attitude of the students which is basically that if what they write involves thinking then it should be difficult.

When teachers were asked about the composition genres (descriptive and narrative) (See Table 7.40) their views varied. Three of the four teachers interviewed said that descriptive compositions are easier because they are short while only one of them claimed that pupils find narratives easy to write because pupils are generally, good story tellers and ought to find narratives easy. Generally, all teachers felt that descriptive compositions entailed pupils having a good command of vocabulary. When the same teachers were asked in the questionnaires about narrative compositions, 3 out the 4 teachers

interviewed, agreed that narratives involved pupils in a lot of discussion, though in another question about descriptive composition, 3 of the 4 teachers were uncertain about whether providing facts and explanations in written compositions make pupils have nothing to discuss. Only one disagreed.

It would appear, however, that as far as teachers are concerned, they agree that conversations can be more easily sustained for narratives rather than descriptive compositions and that the former encourage participation. This view does not, however, necessarily show that in reality this is what happens to students. When the students were interviewed on the extent and quantity of planning engaged in before writing a descriptive composition or a narrative composition, 13 respondents (i.e 54.2 per cent of the sample) stated that a narrative composition requires much more planning, while only 9 (i.e 37.5 per cent of the sample) thought a descriptive composition did. They argued for instance, that the narrative composition they had done, involving arranging a sequence of events in a pick-up van accident, required thinking carefully about the sequence of events and then about the language to use to describe those events. Those who stated that the descriptive composition required much more planning, pointed out that they had difficulty in searching for words to describe properly what they were seeing. This point was reinforced by another question (See Question 15 in Table 7.38) which required students to state which composition involved a member of a pair or group repeating points mentioned for the sake of making other interlocutors understand. The results of the responses show that more than half of the respondents (17 respondents or 70.8 per cent of the sample) regard descriptive compositions as having content which is repeated frequently, and, may, apparently, not carry much new information or elicit new language features.

It is thus evident from the questionnaires and interview schedule, that the descriptive and narrative genres engender different patterns of interaction because of the demands which, the respondents feel, they place on the learners. Since the questionnaires and interviews involved the subjects' responses on how they went about creating knowledge for their compositions (i.e a process) rather than on the products of their verbal interactions (i.e the written composition products), it is worth investigating the subjects' responses in interviews and questionnaires as regards group work which formed the basis of their oral interactions. I will then end up with an account of the field notes data on group work.

### 7.2.3 Findings from questionnaires and interviews on group work and the discourse/speech acts employed during pair/group work

The respondents views on how learners interacted in pair work or group work were found to be significant in casting light on reasons for the occurrence of the observable interactions. This was mainly because understanding both teachers and students' attitudes could help to understand the occurrence of the observable interactional features. Salient questions regarding the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of group work were reserved for the interviews because it was felt that teachers could provide fuller detail in interviews and that students could express themselves much more freely than in questionnaires. The views expressed are, thus related to the Interview schedule.

Table 7.42. Frequency of students' responses in number and percentage, regarding the use of pair work or group work discussions prior to writing.

Item	Interview question	Response	Frequency of response	
			No.	%
5.	Do you understand what your friends say to you in pair/group much better than you do your teacher?	I understand the teacher better than my colleagues	15	62.5
		I understand my colleagues better than I do the teacher	9	37.5
6.	Will you now tell me whether discussing a composition with your friends helps you to write it well.	It helps much	14	58.3
		It helps only a little	8	33.3
		It doesn't help at all	2	8.3
14.	Do you have much to discuss when you are in a pair with a friend or when you are in a group with other students?	In pairs	7	29.2
		In a group	16	66.6
		Don't know	1	4.2
	Why?	<u>Reasons in support of group work</u>		
		In a group, it is possible to compare points of view or notes. In pair work, colleagues may hardly have any point to contribute. You have better views when you have many of them. Many views are found in group work.	*	*
19.	Do you find yourself prevented by a fellow group member from contributing a point during a discussion?	Yes	0	0
		Not at all	24	100



\* Two or more points of view could be repeated by the same subject or different views stated by one of them. Counting the frequency of responses for these views was thus deemed inappropriate.

When the students were asked in the questionnaires if they thought they understood what their friends said to them in pairs or groups much better than they did their teachers. (See Question 5, Table 7.42) more than half the number of respondents (15 respondents or 62.5 per cent of the sample) said that they understood their teacher better. Only 9 (i.e 37.5 per cent of the sample) said that they understood their colleagues much better. When I tried to elicit reasons for these points of view, those who felt that they could gain much from the teacher stated that the teacher was an expert and that they felt there was no serious work in groups. Furthermore, they felt that group work could be easily impeded because group members lacked the vocabulary for expressing themselves. Those who were in favour of pair work and group work, stated three main reasons which ranged from the fact that they feared to ask the teacher questions in teacher-fronted lessons to the fact that their friends could express themselves in Kiswahili if they failed to remember an English word during the discussion, and finally to the fact that they felt they could ask each other questions in groups, while they couldn't ask the teacher. Similarly, those who were in support of pair work and group work, stated that discussing a composition with friends helped them to write the composition well. (See Question 6, Table 7.42). Fourteen respondents i.e 58.3 per cent of the whole sample) replied thus, whereas 8 respondents (i.e 33.3 per cent of the sample) said it helped a little, and only 2 respondents (i.e 8.3 per cent of the whole sample) were uncertain. When the students were asked how they thought their friends assisted them in clarifying points in a discussion (See Question 7, Table 7.37), only one answer was given. Ten respondents (less than half the sample 41.6 per cent)) stated that they felt helped by their friends' simplifying a point or idea; 7 respondents (i.e 29.2 per cent of the sample) said that they were helped by friends to repeat words said in previous utterances, whereas an equal number of respondents said they felt helped because their friends explained meanings of new words (See also Question 13, Table 7.33).

While these responses show that subjects are generally in favour of group work, they also show that the subjects do not wholly agree as to how pair work or group work assists them in learning. Indeed, when I asked them, for example, how elaborating a point or a word prior to writing helps them to write clearly,

they argued that elaboration of points helps to provide them with new ideas, to correct wrong words and to make the language (English) simple. Most of the responses were somewhat irrelevant to the questions, and sometimes the respondents failed to provide any answers to the questions which were in both English and Kiswahili but which the respondents had decided to answer in English, presumably to show that after all they knew some English.

Table 7.43. Frequency of Teachers' views on pupils' working in pairs/groups

Item	Interview question	Response	Frequency of responses
10.	Do you think that pupils talking to one another in a group, use a more simplified language than that of a teacher teaching the whole class?	They normally ask each other questions and provide themselves with words and meanings before seeking the teacher's help	1
		They are able to support or challenge one another	1
		They explain meanings of words to one another	1
		They help one another by pointing out the right expressions, correcting sentences and explaining ideas.	1
11.	Do you think that pair work is more effective than group work ?	Pair work is more effective	3
		Group work is more effective	1
13.	How do your pupils help one another when they are discussing compositions in pair or groups?	They use simplified language	1
		They communicate in a language that is familiar to them	1
		They clarify points by using gestures when they fail to discover words	2
19.	What are the main problems that affect discussion in groups?	Group work interferes with the teacher's scheme of work	1
		Some students fail to be self-reliant as they depend on others	1
		Pupils lack the language with which to express themselves	1
		Not everything discussed in a group is useful . Most of what is accepted in groups tends to be the view of those who are domineering but which may not necessarily be correct	1

The teachers when interviewed, had a number of reasons to support this point of view. They claimed that pupils could support one another by explaining meanings of new words. Later in Question 13 (see Table 7.43 above), teachers admitted that in groups subjects could help themselves even by non-verbal means such as gestures. One teacher claimed that pupils were able to use simplified language and the other claimed that the language used in groups was familiar to the group members. The fact that success in writing depended on how good a student was and that pupils may carry out a discussion well but later fail to express themselves clearly in writing, were the views of another.

#### **7.2.3.1 General overview on group work and evidence from the study's transcripts**

There is a plethora of controversial literature on group work as a method of teaching and learning. While many researchers and writers seem to agree on the usefulness of group work, there is still some disagreement as regards what use group work serves. Most of the American researchers, notably Johnson and Johnson (1978); Johnson, Johnson and Scott (1978) Johnson (1981); and Sharan (1980), tend to see the usefulness of group work as being primarily social rather than intellectual such as the promotion of self esteem which they claim may lead to school achievement. Others like Webb (1982); Long (1977); Long and Porter (1985); and Brumfit (1984), regard group work as a basis for academic achievement. Long and Porter (1985) for instance, value the efficiency of group work on the basis of the comprehensible input which learners offer each other through "shorter syntactically, less complex utterances, higher frequency vocabulary items and the avoidance of idiomatic expressions"(p.213), while Brumfit (1984:69) sees conversations or discussions that take place in groups as a basis for developing fluency. He points out a clear distinction between fluency and accuracy, the latter being related mostly to form, and sees what should be developed primarily, not exclusively, in group work as fluency, since if fluency is promoted it will

develop a pattern of language interaction within the classroom which is as close as possible to that used by competent performers in mother tongue in normal life.

Fluency is thus seen as a means to the subsequent development of accuracy, since a foreign language learner who has the fluency of a mother tongue/native speaker may be disposed towards learning the foreign language with confidence.

Other views on group work have not been as rosy as depicted by Long and Porter (1985) and probably the debate on the usefulness of group work will continue to rage, particularly in places where it has not been frequently and effectively practised. The effectiveness of group work is seen in terms of how much the group achieves success in carrying out its activities in the group and in terms of the contribution each member makes to the group's success. (Damon, 1984; Tann, 1981). Hence, it is acknowledged that a group in which one member may be monopolizing the talk may not be a successful one since others who are either shy or are unable, may not be able to benefit from the group. The personality and status of the group members may, therefore, be worth taking into account as group members are likely to give in to a domineering group member, who may, after all, not necessarily be contributing much to the group's task. Another hurdle to be crossed concerns how effectively the group members are working towards the attainment of their goal. In their studies in some British schools, Galton et al (1980) and Bennett (1978) found that although children worked in groups, they rarely worked "as a group" (Bennett 1978:140) and warn that merely putting children in groups may not ensure that they are effectively doing group work as they could be indulging in off-task behavior. This could happen in group work, where a big group of six or even ten students might be formed because of the shortage of books to work with on a project or even in a reading comprehension or literature lesson.

When I asked the student respondents whether they found they had much to discuss in pair work or in group work (See Table 7.42), 7 respondents (i.e 29.2 per cent of the sample) said that they had much to discuss in pairs, 16 respondents (i.e 66.6 per cent of the sample) said that they had much to discuss in group work. However, when I asked them why they thought it was so, those who were in favour of pair work said that it is easier to contribute a point in pair work than in group work because of the friendship that is likely to arise between two discussants. They argued that it was difficult to contribute a point in a group and reach a compromise as each person may stick to his own point of view. Those who were in support of group work as opposed to pair work, pointed out that in a group it is possible to compare points of view or notes. They argued that in a pair, your colleague may hardly have any point to contribute, and that you may arrive at better ideas when you raise them in a group. The teachers' views on the use of group work were however, interesting. It was unfortunate that the teacher-respondent sample was too small to offer reliable and varied responses. However, each of the four points raised here represents the views of one of the teachers in the sample.

One of the teachers in the sample, expressed the view that group work interferes with the teacher's scheme of work. Another teacher saw group work as inhibiting students from being self-reliant as it makes them depend so much on others, while another stated that the pupils lack the language to express themselves. The last respondent pointed out that not everything discussed in groups was useful and showed concern about students who are domineering and whose views get taken as being final. I will come to this last point later, but suffice it to say that the responses of the teachers seem to be somewhat at odds with those of their students. While their students are eager to work in groups, the teachers do not seem to be eager for group work and see it as an impediment to their teaching schemes. The teachers' views may be seen within the following perspectives. On the one hand, the teachers in question were themselves not trained to work in groups and do not as a result see why their students should be working in groups, if success in examinations can be attained anyway without working in groups. There is also a lack of motivation on the part of the teachers, particularly with the increasingly eroded social status of the teacher in Tanzania. My personal communication with the teachers also tended to confirm the view expressed by one teacher that group work tends to interfere with the teachers' scheme of work. These teachers, operate within a prescribed syllabus which has got to be covered whether one operationalizes his lessons using group work or the much more favoured traditional teacher-fronted approach. Group work is thus seen as irrelevant and an obstacle to the accomplishment of the schemes of work.

Obstacles to the implementation of group work cannot, however, make group work irrelevant. It is, apparently, a useful teaching strategy, irrespective of the obstacles to adopting it. The problems facing learners while carrying out group work are, therefore, worthy of some concern. One of these which was pointed out by the teachers in their interview responses, was as regards a few students in a group monopolizing or even hijacking the discussion, because of their personality or the status which is accorded to them, not necessarily by their fellow pupils but by the teachers. I will return to this point when I give a brief account of the data elicited by field notes in the section that follows.

#### **7.2.4 Field notes as complementary research instruments**

Field notes are now widely regarded as very useful supplementary instruments especially in situations such as the one with which I was faced, in which the financial /economic situation makes it impossible to use a video camera.

Although field notes may have their limitations in the sense that the researcher is unlikely to record everything that he sees, the video camera may not be focused on each and every place that the researcher thinks would be of interest for his study. Field notes, may therefore, despite their limitations, still tell us something that questionnaires and interviews may not have revealed.

My personal observation may help to lend some credence to the fact that the social standing of a pupil among his fellow pupils and among teachers, particularly as a result of his performance, may very much determine the pattern of communication in the classroom. This will very much affect learning, especially in situations where the teacher tends to ask questions only of those whom he thinks are likely to answer and help him get along with his scheme of work. I observed that those students who were bright were the ones who were often called on by the teacher to speak or answer questions. Two reasons can be adduced for this. On the one hand the students' lack of communicative competence exemplified by their inability to utter even a single English sentence, means that the teacher gets dissuaded from asking a question which he knows will not be responded to. On the other hand, failure by students who maintain silence in the classroom, could mean that the researcher might interpret the classes as dull, or even that the researcher could fail to find anything worth audiotaping. I noted that certain boys - who probably not by coincidence constituted a sub- sample of High Performers - were either chosen as chairmen or secretaries of groups and were listened to attentively by both their fellow pupils. They were also less interrupted by their teachers when speaking than the Low Performers. When it came to noting down the main points of the discussion, the High Performers were the ones who were delegated by their fellow peers to write them down and read them out. The High Performers took long turns in conversation and interrupted their friends or completed utterances which their friends had failed to complete.

The following exchange (See Appendix R, Transcript x) is an illustration of the domineering stance of one of the subjects (Student S1) which led Student S2 not to contribute much to the discussion and to accept whatever he was told by Student S1. In this exchange, the two students are discussing the two pictures which they are comparing in order to find the differences between them. One can easily see the frequent interruptions by Student S1 and his repetition of words and sentences so that S2 can follow. Although this may at first glance, be seen as a form of the support he is offering to S2, the high pitched voice and

the rising intonation seem to have scared S2 to the point of giving very short incomplete sentences and merely repeating what S1 says.

- 0008S2: in picture B I will see two house  
 0009S1: yes [ picture B I will see two houses ]  
 0009aS2: [ picture B there are two houses]  
 0010S1: one house  
 0011S2: yes  
 0012S1: [picture B ] I will see one tree  
 0013aS1: [picture B] I will see one tree  
 0014S2: [picture B]  
 0015S1: [one tree] and picture A I will see  
 015aS2: [one tree]  
 0016S1: eeh picture A one tree and (in a high pitched voice)  
 0017S2: yes  
 0018S1: what (in a high pitched voice)  
 0019S2: one tree  
 0020S1: not a difference this is not a difference - this is something which is not the same - or (.....)

It is apparent that Student S1 is assuming the role of a teacher and his discussion with student S2 does not look to be much different from that observable in teacher-student interactions. Rather than ask his colleague about the picture, Student S1 appears merely to utter phrases for S2 to repeat. Student S2 does not, therefore, seem to benefit much linguistically because what he does is basically to complete a word or repeat what the other student says. In turn 0015a when S2 says elliptically that he can see one tree, he seems to virtually cause S1 some irritation as the latter shows his surprise and- probably- anger at this unexpected answer. His rejection of S2's answer is further revealed in turn 0020 when he abruptly tells S2 that what he said was not right . We would of course expect S1 to provide an alternative answer which could help S2, but this is what we hear him tell S2 after the latter has acknowledged the reply.

- 0021S2: yes (with a rising intonation)  
 0022S1: number three [ is showing that ]  
 0022aS2: [picture B I will see]  
 0023S1: picture B in picture A the sun /.../ they will - they will- there will be the sun which rises (in a muffled voice)  
 0024S2: which rises  
 0025S1: yes which rises

What is evident is that despite his domineering position, Student S1 does not seem to offer much assistance to Student S2 who merely agrees, offering short answers. This example might help to give an insight into the nature of grouping which could help the learners and that which might be envisaged not to help but hinders. It probably underscores the fact that pairing the low proficiency students with the high proficiency ones may not help the former. The experiences of Tann (1981:51) in some of the classes she observed are worth reflecting on.

Among the boys, leadership was less clearly defined and the groups appeared more democratic. However, in both groups, the brightest was not always the best in the group context. Often because the brightest child accepted the position granted by other members, such a child expected its suggestions to be accepted without challenge. This frequently led to brief, blunt contributions which were imprecise, unreasoned and substantiated by 'it is so'.

It is possible that the short-duration discussions such as I experienced, may have been due to the lack of interest among the students because they were not used to doing group work and had not been taught about effective participation. In some groups only one or two members could be heard and the rest simply listened to them either because they had no idea to contribute, or primarily, because they felt linguistically constrained in saying anything. These were the subjects who wrote their compositions hurriedly after a discussion and immediately began reading Geography books or novels without caring to correct their work either. Many reasons might account for this degree of apathy, among which could be their attitudes to English as a whole, but there is no discounting the fact that apathy in a discussion could have an effect on writing. I also noted that some subjects, either because they distrusted what they had been discussing in groups, or because of their inability to employ language to write down their ideas, wrote their pair work/group work compositions in the same way as they had done in teacher-fronted lessons. What they did was to simply change a word or add a few words to the original sentence. This was particularly the case with descriptive compositions.

The effectiveness of group work as a language teaching strategy will, I hope, still attract some attention. I hope to point out some limitations of group work as a strategy for generating interactional features in the next chapter.



### 7.3 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to show that despite some limitations in the linguistic ability of the subjects of the study as shown by hesitations and incomplete sentences (see the transcripts in Appendix R), as well as short compositions which had a lot of errors, something could be salvaged from the transcripts and written compositions to form the basis of the analysis of the conversational data and compositions, which helped to cast some light - however dim that light might be - on the language features of the conversations and written compositions.

Teacher-student and student -student interactions have been looked into in order to get a general picture of the patterns of interaction in the classrooms and particularly, patterns of interaction in pair work and group work vis-a-vis teacher-student patterns of interaction. An attempt has then been made to see what lexical, syntactical and cohesion features were generated in these compositions and how classroom discourse, analysed on the basis of the speech act functions, could be said to bear on the generation of these features. Finally, the questionnaires and interviews as well as field notes have been scrutinized so as to ascertain how they complemented other research instruments in highlighting the results of this study. I will now try to sum up the results of the study and point out the implications of these results for language teaching and language learning.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF THE STUDY, INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

The preceding chapter has exclusively dealt with the results of the study and their interpretations. I am now presenting this chapter not only as a resume of the previous one, but also as a flashback to other previous chapters so as to sum up the study and highlight its pedagogical implications. The first part of the chapter will be devoted to a general summary of what the study was all about. This part includes the objectives of the study, the selection of the population at which the study was aimed and the research instruments that were administered for the collection of the data. The research questions which formed the basis of the study will also be dealt with in this part, just as will the hypotheses the study engendered and the significance which this study was envisaged to have on the teaching of English in EFL classrooms in general and the teaching of writing in Tanzania in particular. The second part of the chapter will comprise the summary of the findings of this study on lexis, syntax and cohesion which were the linguistic measures constituting the quality of compositions. The third part of the chapter will comprise an account of the communicative functions (speech acts) which were instrumental in realizing the lexical, syntactical and cohesion features analyzed. The fourth part of the chapter will deal with the paralinguistic features observed and how they contributed to the understanding of speech acts and, subsequently to writing.

Although not substantially covered in the previous chapter, paralinguistic features appeared to be very significant in ensuring the smooth flow of conversations and were in the context of this study, helpful in ensuring that there was no total breakdown of communication among the interlocutors. Indeed, the conversation transcripts in the Appendix (See Appendix R) abound with so many intonation features and other non-linguistic phenomena that it would be inauspicious not to consider the role of paralinguistic and non-linguistic features in conversations of low proficiency students as most of my subjects were. The views of the respondents obtained through questionnaires and interviews will also be dealt with and will be followed by a brief summary of the findings in relationship to the hypotheses which were projected in the first chapter. The final part of this chapter will then focus on the limitations of the study and finally end with what I regard to be the pedagogical implications of

the study for EFL teaching generally and for the teaching of writing particularly, in Tanzania.

### **8.1 The Study**

This study began and was conceived with twin objectives in mind. The first objective of the study was to investigate the effects which different patterns of interaction in the classroom would have on different writing tasks (composition types). The study also attempted to examine whether or not, the interactional features that arise in the classroom have a bearing on the discourse and the syntactical and lexical features produced in descriptive and narrative compositions.

The target population for this study was made up of a selected sample of 24 (twenty four) Form 2 students from two Tanzanian secondary schools - hence twelve students from each school. The sample was selected on the basis of a cloze (language proficiency) test which resulted in there being three levels of subjects: the high proficiency students, the average proficiency and the low proficiency subjects. In forming pairs and groups, an attempt was made to ensure that each of these levels was represented, especially in group work. The teacher-sample was made up of two English teachers; the Form 2 English teacher and the head of department of each school.

The research instruments used for collecting the data were: audio-tape transcripts, written compositions, classroom observation schedules, field notes, questionnaires and interviews. The assumptions of the study were that the patterns of interactions realized by speech acts which occurred in discussions prior to writing, would affect the quantity of the lexical and syntactical features of the written compositions. It was also envisaged that the patterns of interaction generated in pair work and group work prior to writing, would affect the quality of the lexical and syntactical features of the written compositions and that the patterns of interaction would affect writing tasks differently.

When the study was conceived, it was hoped that it would highlight the problems learners face when they are composing as well as show how they employ communicative functions (speech acts) to communicate. This would help to elucidate whether there are aspects of features of communication which help them more than others to express themselves in writing. Oral language becomes the primary means of communication during the early school years before writing competence develops. It was therefore conjectured that using

oral language effectively, coupled with instruction on writing, would help to strengthen the latter, since the two modes are different but interdependent in many respects.

The study was expected to contribute to two aspects of education and language teaching. One was that teachers, administrators and curriculum developers would see how best to help the learners through provision of teaching materials that would enhance communication and interaction in the classroom. The study was also aimed at making the teachers attempt, despite many constraints, to assign tasks that would promote interaction in the classroom and enhance the use of group work as a language teaching method with a view to encouraging the learners to engage in independent problem solving, and also relieving the teachers of the burden they face in correcting all language exercises that are done by their pupils, so that eventually they might have time to concentrate on other language teaching problems. The study was also aimed at making learners respond to various writing exercises in the hope that these activities could be related to the pupils' other subject areas in the curriculum.

## **8.2 Summary of findings elicited by the study**

The findings elicited by the study are both quantitative and qualitative in nature. They are quantitative in the sense that they are based chiefly on the quantitative measures of linguistic devices of lexis, syntax and cohesion. They are, however, also qualitative in the sense that they make use of discourse features to throw light on the occurrence of the linguistic features observed, and are also based on the observations done in the classroom and recorded in field notes.

### **8.2.1 Lexical features of the written compositions**

There were two areas regarding the use of words which were looked into. The first was the number of words (tokens) used in compositions and the second was as regards the different types of words used in compositions. As shown in the previous chapter, the subjects did not differ much in the quantity of words they used in compositions and hence in the length of those compositions. There was a very slight difference, for instance in the number of words used by both High Performers and Low Performers with the latter having more tokens than the former (See Table 7.8). The fact that the High Performers had, however, more tokens than the Low Performers, bears testimony to the fact that the nature of the writing task (genre) has both an impact both on the number of tokens that are generated and affects subjects with differing abilities differently. The more

proficient subjects are able to make use of their linguistic resources to narrate events much more lengthily than the less proficient subjects, though length may not necessarily correlate with the quality of the composition. The descriptive composition for instance, constrained the subjects to using fewer words because the task did not require elaboration of the objects and events the subjects saw, this was the reason why even the high proficiency subjects saw no need to employ many words. The narrative tasks, on the other hand, showed a far greater variety of words than the descriptive compositions. The nature of the task did, therefore, also affect the variety of words the learners used, since a repetition of what the subjects saw in the descriptive composition constrained them to using the same common words and more or less the same syntactical structures. It is in view of this that I would like now to turn my attention to the word types used in the written compositions.

The subjects, generally, elicited very few different types of words thus revealing a stark lack of adequate vocabulary and the fact that most of the words they used in compositions were repeated. There was no significant difference in the number of words between the High Performers and the Low Performers (See Table 7.8). Most of the word types used were related to events rather than actions or abstract objects thus reflecting the subjects' little knowledge of use of nouns and hence inability to pack information economically in nouns rather than verbs. Repeating words may not be negatively related to the quality of a composition if the repetition leads to elaboration of points mentioned in previous sentences. There was hardly any elaboration, and repetitions were often of words previously used. The few words that were different from those commonly used, were generated mostly by High Performers who seemed to have used the same words in the discussion groups. The Low Performers hardly used these words which one would assume they ought to have picked up from their more able counterparts. The fact that they were not able to use them in their written compositions further corroborates the fact that they were not quite sure how to use them and thought they would use them wrongly. On the other hand, this might also mean that they did not trust their colleagues in groups, however competent these colleagues were. I will be returning to this point later since it might help to explain why, in spite of the feedback from groups, most of the subjects' compositions written after pair work or group work did not differ much in content from those they had written in teacher fronted lessons (without feedback from their fellow students). The whole matter has to be seen within the framework of teaching that, for different reasons, rarely encourages group work and resorts to exercises that are much more geared to

reinforcing grammar and vocabulary than to using language for promoting communication.

### **8.2.2 Syntactic features**

The second part of the analysis of the results was focussed on the syntactic features of the written compositions. The results of the study revealed that certain syntactic features were related to the way the class was organized for learning as well as the nature of the task done. Locative and existential expressions, for instance, were found to proliferate in TF and GW tasks more than in PW tasks. The embedding of complex structures such as relative clauses was also found to be a feature of student-student interaction tasks rather than the teacher-led tasks. However, it was also noticed that the ability to vary sentence constructions such as the use of gerundial constructions rather than the relative clause constructions with which the subjects appeared to be familiar (as these structures are taught to Form 2 during the first term), was an ability of the HPs rather than the LPs.

The use of different types of sentences was another measure used to gauge the language competence of the subjects. While there was no difference among the HPs and the LPs in the use of compound sentences which rely on simple additive conjunctions such as *and*, *so*, and *so, then*, there was a difference among them in the use of complex sentences with the HPs using complex sentences more than the LPs. On the other hand the findings show that there is a clear relationship between the use of certain structures and the nature of the task. Descriptive composition tasks for example, led to the use of compound sentences whereas the narrative compositions tended to lead to the use of complex sentence constructions. However, there was hardly any difference in the use of non-finite constructions by the subjects, thus revealing that non-finite structures may not have been acquired at this stage and at the subjects' level of proficiency.

There were linguistic features deemed to constitute an aspect of the complexity of a composition, which is seen as the ability of a writer to explain ideas they bring forth in compositions. The syntactical features were envisaged to occur in the discussions that took place prior to writing and subsequently, in the written compositions.

As the preceding chapter indicates, there was naturally a substantial use of locative and existential expressions in the descriptive compositions because of

the nature of the task which dictated the use of such expressions as: *there is/ there are...*, *the woman has...* and forms denoting places such as: *on the river, near the house etc* (See Table 7.14). However, it was interesting to find that there were more relative clause constructions than prepositional phrases (See Table 7.15). One would have expected fewer relative clause constructions and more prepositional phrases because of the tendency for learners to incorporate more prepositional phrases than relative clauses in their day-to-day speaking. Two reasons may be held to account for this. One is the fact that English prepositions pose quite considerable difficulty to Swahili speakers who are learning English because Swahili does not have as many prepositions to express the same spatial relation, for example, as English does. (Consider the use of the prepositions *in, into, inside* versus the Swahili *ndani*.) Another could be the fact that because the subjects had already learned about relative clauses in their English lessons (as stipulated in the syllabus), they apparently felt at ease using them.

Tyler, Jefferies and Davies (1988:106) writing about the role of relative clauses see the packaging of information in relative clause constructions as serving "to focus the head noun (the entity being foregrounded) and to background the supplementary information" and further see the relative clause as serving a better function than coordinating conjunctions in defining tightly the relationship among the ideas. A close look at the composition scripts reveals, however, that the use of relative clause constructions by the subjects of this study did not often aim at defining propositions within sentences. Relative clauses tended to be loosely used and were used where a verb (especially a gerundial verb) could have been used, thus showing how elementary writers are prone to using structures inappropriately in discourse, leading to a presentation of information in a manner in which it should not have been presented.

Studies of complex syntactical structures in written compositions have tended to focus mostly on college or university students whose writing competence is much higher than that of elementary writers. The measure of syntactical complexity that is universally applied to writers may in this case not be justified, especially if one takes into account the additional fact that the measure of syntactical complexity has been based on other genres such as the genre of scientific writing. However, we still can assess the writing of beginners on the basis of measures that pertain to unsophisticated writing such as the writing of descriptive and narrative compositions. One of these measures is the measure

of subordination as an index of syntactical complexity (Tannen, 1982; Biber, 1986; and Beaman, 1984) which is at times seen to override the simple use of coordinating conjunctions (Mills 1990).

The results of this study indicate that there were numbers of prepositional phrases and relative clauses in both pair work and group work but narrative group work had the most of these structures. There were more complex sentences and more subordinate clauses in the narrative group work than in the teacher led narrative tasks for both the HPs and the LPs (See Tables 7.18 and 7.19). Most of the compound sentences were generated in the descriptive compositions whereas complex sentences were generated in the narrative compositions. Although descriptive pair work task led to the production of a larger number of complex sentences than the teacher fronted task, the difference was very small. The subjects used simple subordinate clauses in only one or two complex sentences and even then, most of these subordinate clauses tended to be wrongly used. None of the subjects was able to generate four subordinate clauses. As regards the non-finite structures as a measure of syntactic complexity, the teacher-led activity was, as far as the descriptive compositions were concerned, better than the pair work for generating these structures. On the other hand, pair/group work interactions proved to be better for the generation of non-finite constructions than the teacher-fronted teaching in the narrative task and it also led to the generation of complex sentences.

However, the fact that complex sentences were generated more in pair work/group work than in teacher fronted tasks, and the additional fact that it was the HPs rather than the LPs who exhibited more use of these complex structures, shows that it is the quantity of the interaction as well as its quality that affects how complex features of the language will be. The interactions that arose in group narrative tasks, for instance, were better for promoting complex structures than interactions prior to descriptive compositions because the interactions in oral narrative tasks involved speech acts that led subjects to confirm and clarify what their colleagues had said. The teacher-fronted descriptive task was, on the other hand, led to the generation of existential expressions (there is, there are) and locative expressions such as here, there, near the river. This could have been because of the nature of the teacher-student talk which tends to follow regular patterns of instruction and responses as when the teacher's questions such as What can you see in the picture?, are followed by the response: There is a house in the picture. There was also a prevalence of existential expressions in pair work, suggesting that pupils in pair work, may have been



interacting in the same way, particularly when the least proficient learner was paired with one of the most proficient learners rather than an average proficiency learner. However, existentials/locatives featured in their writing for various reasons, the most salient of which was the fact the Low Performers simply did not know how to exploit other resources of language to express their ideas.

The fact that some of the language features encoded in interactions did not feature in the compositions creates some doubt as to whether all students benefit from discussions. This is testified to by the fact that there were certain language features used by the LPs which were not featured in their writing. It can, therefore, be stated that learners are able to incorporate into their writing what they have discussed if they are able to use language resources to incorporate those ideas. Another factor is that unless learners are used to a system of learning that allows them to work independently, they do not seem to cope in the new system, particularly if they are low ability students, and they tend to trust their teachers more than they do their fellow students. This view is reinforced by the data from questionnaires and interviews (See Table 7).

### **8.2.3 Cohesion analysis**

The analysis of cohesive devices used in the written compositions formed a third aspect of the analysis of the written products. This was not without reason. The use of linguistic devices to show a semantic relationship in a composition is a critical aspect of writing which, together with an insight into how coherence is achieved, constitute the basis of ascertaining the quality of the written products. This is discussed below under the headings of the types of cohesion examined.

#### **8.2.3.1 Use of conjunctions**

The analysis of conjunctions was deemed important because of the need to show whether a relationship between propositions expressed in sentences was a logical one or had simply been arbitrarily expressed. Elementary writers, like the subjects of this study, tend to use conjunctions which fail to establish a logical relationship between one sentence and another. Keller-Cohen (1987:166) offers these two examples to illustrate the fact that merely using conjunctions is not enough and that the writer should have an understanding of content as well as world knowledge so as to show some logic in what he writes. The two examples are:

- a) The boy opened the can before he poured the soup (Logical relation)
- b) The girl ate the cake after she opened the door (Arbitrary relation)

If the child writes:

- c) After the boy poured the soup, he opened the can or
- d) The boy ate the hotdog and after that he poured the ketchup

he would be seen to be encoding extralinguistic knowledge but not expressing the logical relationship between the propositions demanded by the pragmatic imperative.

On the basis of the data shown in Section 7.3.1.1 of Chapter Seven, the subjects of this study often wrote down sentences similar to (c) and (d) above, because of cognitive and linguistic constraints which made them fail to recognize the logical relationship between one part of the sentence and another. This may serve to explain why there was an abundance of additive conjunctions and a paucity of causal conjunctions. Apparently because of the low language proficiency level of the subjects, there was a proliferation of reference cohesion (use of pronouns and deictics) in both the oral discourse and in the written compositions, thus revealing a lack of the subjects' understanding of written conventions since the subjects tended to transfer intact, features of the oral language used in discussions which were often based on the presupposed or shared knowledge which the subjects had had with their interlocutors during the discussions.

It is worth noting that some temporal and adversative conjunctions which were used rather profusely in discussions, were not appropriately used in the written compositions. Additives and adversatives were rather haphazardly used in the discussions, and tended to maintain the flow of discourse rather than logically connect the propositions in utterances. Similarly in written discourse, these conjunctions were not appropriately used to connect one point to another or to expand it. The findings thus illustrate how cohesive devices can be poorly used especially in the written discourse of low proficiency writers whose sentence constructions become incoherent because they lack proper use of cohesion. Substitution cohesion and ellipsis, both of which depend on the speaker's understanding of his interlocutor's previous utterance as well a linguistic knowledge of how to construct the sentence elliptically and yet convey the same information, were scarce language features in the subjects' written

compositions. The few that were used were, however, mainly a feature of the descriptive rather than narrative composition task apparently because describing something rather than giving a temporal account of a sequence of events seems to involve repeating one's interlocutor's previous utterance in either confirming or disapproving it. In so doing there is a tendency to repeat the interlocutor's previous words, replacing them with fewer so as to continue the conversation. Since the subjects were low proficiency writers, it was not therefore surprising that the substitution features they used in the discussion were also found in the written compositions. The findings of this study however, show that what is significant is not how frequently the cohesion ties are used but how appropriately they get used. There was for instance, a clear relationship between the dearth of cohesion ties in the written compositions and the lack of clarification of ideas and reasoning in the prewriting discussions. The fact that there were more different types of cohesion ties in narrative compositions than in the descriptive composition shows that the generation of cohesion ties is dependent not only on the writer's competence but also on the nature of the task.

These results seem to agree for instance, with the findings of Allard and Ulatowska (1991) who found that written narrative compositions contained a significantly higher frequency of reference ties than a procedural task in which a child explained rules for playing a sport of his or her choice. The argument given by the authors is that the nature of the procedural task did not require much use of pronouns because attention was not being focused on a single character or item as in a narrative. In their study there was almost an equal number of characters and items to which reference was made. The fact that narratives involve not only describing characters or items and physical actions, but a sequence of events, made the narrative have a higher frequency of reference cohesion, particularly demonstratives.

The frequency of reference cohesion is thus affected by the mode of the discourse. The fact that the only correlation between the use of reference cohesion and the scores of students was in the teacher-fronted tasks and group work, may indicate that subjects tend to be able to use reference devices more effectively when they are guided by their teachers or when they are in larger groups where the more capable students play the role of teachers and help the less able. This might indicate that the subjects on their own and when in pairs, may not be able to use reference cohesion effectively as they are unable to make correct references to characters or events in a text. The fact that there

were not many incorrectly used reference items in the written data, should not lead us into believing that the subjects were competent in using reference cohesion. As a matter of fact, the subjects, particularly the LPs generated more errors in the narratives thus indicating that the subjects were apt to make more errors the more complex the task became. In his study of children's use of pronouns, Bartlett (1984) found that children used more pronouns than nouns and that the less able subjects were more ambiguous in their use of pronouns than the able students, particularly if the task was complex. The simplicity of the task could have helped lessen the frequency of ambiguity. The high frequency of incorrectly used personal pronouns among low performers, particularly in the narrative task in which the mentioning of a number of characters and events related to them made them make mistakes, shows that the subjects could have found the narrative task to be more complex than the descriptive one.

Unlike Bartlett's findings, my findings show that many of the subjects tended to use both nouns and pronouns to refer to characters, and hence often failed to specify the referents to which the pronoun referred. This is apparently due to the assumption that the reader could easily tell that the words "the man", for example, referred to the cyclist or the driver in the narrative composition. The apparent lack of a significant difference between the LPs and the HPs in the use of substitution and ellipsis cohesion devices, was a clear reflection of the subjects' lack of mastery of competence in handling structures of English which are used in substitution and ellipsis. These structures are certainly too complex, it would seem, for Form 2 students, particularly substitution, which involves the replacement of a lexical item which the student might not know.

The low competence level of the subjects can also be said to be reflected by their inability to choose synonyms and hyponyms. Reiteration devices involved the repetition of the same word, thus indicating the subjects' lack of vocabulary and the tendency to refer back to the same words and underscoring the limited word types the subjects used in their compositions. While repeating the same words may not necessarily reflect inadequate vocabulary if the repetition leads to expansion or elaboration of a previous word or sentence, the repetition of words by the subjects rarely led to the expansion of points. The fact that there was at least a small correlation between the use of reiteration devices and the scores that the teachers gave the subjects after they had written their compositions, only in the teacher-fronted tasks and narrative group work, might serve to explain only how limited the resources of words learners have access to is rather than anything about the acquisition of these words.

#### **8.2.4. Speech acts and written discourse**

The results of the study as regards speech acts reveal that there were differences as regards how speech acts were employed in the teacher-fronted tasks and in collaborative pair work and group work (See Tables 7.12 and 7.13 and Figures 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4). The speech acts employed in teacher-fronted tasks were characteristic of teacher-fronted discourse (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Coulthard, 1977; Bellack et al, 1966) in which low level questions and the giving of information mostly by the teacher predominated. There were more low level questions in the descriptive teacher-fronted task than there were in the teacher-fronted narrative and there were on the other hand, more high level questions in the narrative group work task than there were in pair work (See Figures 7.1 and 7.2). This suggests that the narrative genre had content which made the teacher ask questions which required some thinking. The results also indicate that in the teacher-fronted tasks there were more speech acts related to giving information on content than those related to giving information on linguistic forms thus suggesting that the teachers were much more interested in presenting content rather than in explaining the linguistic forms to students. It is interesting to note that there was no elaboration or expansion of points in either the discussions of the descriptive or narrative composition, though the teachers did request students to expand or elaborate to a small extent in discussions related to the descriptive composition but hardly at all in the narrative composition discussions. It is also worth noting that whereas the teachers offered acknowledgments to students' responses in the discussions of descriptive compositions, no such acknowledgment was ever made in the narrative composition, presumably because of the complexity of the narrative task and also as I noted in the classroom, because all teachers thought that the students were after all too used to telling stories to require a lengthy discussion or instructions on how to write a narrative composition.

Speculating acts and reasoning acts were thought to show whether or not students engaged in high level thinking in the oral discussions. The results indicate that there were more speculating acts in the descriptive discussion than there were in the narrative discussions but there were, on the contrary, more reasoning acts in the narrative discussion than in the descriptive discussions (See Figures 7.3 and 7.4). Acts of speculation involve such expressions as *I think* and *cannot, therefore*, have contributed much to critical thinking since even those who could not sustain the conversation or complete utterances, simply used speculating speech acts as opening remarks or

hedges. The HPs displayed much more reasoning than the LPs and most of the reasoning acts were in the narrative discussions. The HPs can thus, be said to have differed from the LPs in that the former engaged in those communicative acts which were related to problem solving and to the expansion and elaboration of ideas which may have subsequently led to complex syntactical and lexical features.

The difference between the LPs and the HPs in engaging in certain communicative acts is further reinforced by the fact that expanding and elaborating, predicting, clarifying form, and requesting information on form and content were exclusively acts engaged in by the HPs. Expanding and elaborating occurred mostly in narrative group work discussion whereas predicting was mainly a feature of the descriptive composition discussions. Predicting was concerned mainly with what the subjects thought was going to happen and it is, therefore, likely that the subjects may have found it easier to use such an expression as "I think they are going to eat the big fish" in the descriptive rather than narrative discussion because the latter showed clearly and logically the sequence of events.

Clarifying forms had a very low frequency and appeared only once. This is, conceivably, due to the fact that the learners are too constrained by inadequate vocabulary to clarify meanings of words to one another. Another reason could be that because the subjects were absorbed in conversations, they tended to be too preoccupied with giving information about the content to show any concern for the meanings of words. This could explain why there was hardly any clarification of form and content though these are important in written discourse. It was the narrative task, however, which evinced slightly more clarifications of content in the discussions though this was hardly noticed in the written compositions. .

In group work there were long discussions which must have made the subjects preoccupied with content rather than appropriate linguistic expressions and vocabulary for all the characters and events unfolding in the story. This trend was also revealed in the subjects' requests for others to give information on content or form which took a very low profile, probably because the subjects had had very little discussion on what they saw in the picture and moved suddenly to another stage, making it impossible for those who did not understand to request explanations of content or meanings of words. Speech acts related to repetitions were a frequent phenomenon and took the form of

repeating words uttered in previous utterances or repeating the information contained in previous utterances.

Whereas in teacher-fronted lessons, repeating information by the teacher may be designed to make a student understand the word or simply be an attempt to attract the attention of the student, repeating words or utterances made a significant contribution in pair work and group work as a means of making students understand the content and the linguistic forms, as well as a strategy for continuing the discussion. The repetition of words was the most frequent speech act of repetition followed by repeating information on content and, subsequently, by low level questions (See Table 7.13 and Figs.7.3 and 7.4). The results also reveal that the HPs were able to repeat, giving information on form, in the narrative - though to a very small extent - whereas the LPs were able to repeat, giving information on form, in the descriptive composition discussions. These results could serve as an illustration of the fact that the LPs are able to provide feedback on simple linguistic forms whereas the HPs are somewhat better at providing more sophisticated linguistic forms in the more linguistically demanding narrative composition discussions.

Repetitions affected the occurrence of certain language elements like determiners and deictics (demonstratives) which were also discernible in the written compositions . Although there was a relationship between such interactional patterns as repetitions in the discussion and the occurrence of these features in the compositions, this relationship did not seem to improve the quality of the compositions.

The role of speech acts in generating lexical and syntactical features in both the descriptive composition and the narrative composition discussions, was even more important than the quantity of these acts, since what was crucial was to ascertain how the subjects were able to encode language in these acts and whether the linguistic forms generated, varied from task to task as well as among the HPs and the LPs.

Not all speech acts can be said to have played a major role in generating the content and linguistic forms needed to tackle the writing tasks, since some acts can be said to have been more procedural than conducive to eliciting the desired content and linguistic forms. The most notable communicative acts that were contributive to the generation of lexis in written compositions were, for instance, the repetitions used in questioning, agreeing, confirming, and checking or verifying statements. Expanding or elaborating was another

strategy for elucidating words or points. Others were clarification acts denoted by repetitions of lexical items and the use of paralinguistic features such as rising intonation, a high pitched voice and frequent pauses. Questions did bring about responses which, when encoded in long turns, helped to generate locative expressions, prepositional phrases and relative clauses. Arguments leading to the clarification of points were closely identified with the formation of subordinate clause constructions. The role of speech acts was also discernible in the generation of conjunctions, particularly, expansion or elaboration acts, requests for information, requests for clarification of content or form, requests for confirmation as well as predicting and reasoning. Some of these acts were also evident in the generation of cohesive devices. It is evident, nevertheless, that no single speech act can be pointed out as being solely contributory to particular linguistic features since, in one turn or move (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Coulthard, 1977), there was a possibility of having more than one or two acts. Moreover, in producing some linguistic forms, the interlocutor could move from acknowledging to elaborating or from giving information on content to clarifying the earlier information he gave.

#### **8.2.5 Paralinguistic and non-linguistic features in discussions prior to writing**

Paralinguistic and non-linguistic features can sometimes be employed by low proficiency learners to compensate for the lack of language resources. The nodding of one's head may thus be used to signal a protest just as a high pitched voice may.

The subjects of the study did resort to some paralinguistic and non-linguistic communicative devices in their discussions, which certainly had an impact on the oral discourse and, subsequently on writing. While the paralinguistic features such as intonation and a rise in voice pitch were discernible features of the conversational data, the non-linguistic features such as gestures or nodding of heads in approval, appeared during the discussion and were recorded in the field notes. The most notable paralinguistic feature was the rising intonation. The rise in intonation was significant in two contexts.

The most notable aspect of the rise in intonation in discussions was the use of a rising intonation as a question marker. This was often the case where the speaker could not use or did not know how to use the conventional verb-subject word order in forming questions and simply had a rise in the final position of his question. Another aspect of the use of the rising intonation was to signal



attention or to seek some clarification of content or linguistic form. Sometimes the speaker used a high pitched voice when the speaker was disapproving of what his interlocutor had said in the previous turn or when an argument ensued. Disapproval was also registered by the nodding of heads, just as was approval. Sometimes the nodding of a head was an indication that what the interlocutor had said was acknowledged and that he was allowed to continue. The use of non-linguistic features was mainly resorted to by those who could not speak English properly and who feared to demean themselves by talking in Swahili.

#### **8.2.6 Questionnaires and interviews**

Questions were asked on the use of oral language in discussions and its impact on the learners' subsequent writing of compositions. The responses indicated that more than half of the the sample, found the expressions the teachers used in the classroom prior to writing a composition useful in helping them to write a composition. The teachers' responses indicated that all teachers acknowledge the fact that only the bright students could incorporate the expressions the teacher used in the discussions prior to writing, in their written compositions.

While generally, all students stated in the interviews that they used the expressions the teachers introduced in lessons prior to the students' writing of compositions, only a small number of the respondents admitted that they used expressions from either the teacher-student discussions or student-student discussions.

As regards the composition genres, the students admitted that narrative compositions involved substantially more planning and were much more difficult than descriptive compositions. The narrative composition was also the composition which more than half of the student respondents said that they had much to discuss about. As regards the communicative/speech acts, the questionnaires dealt mainly with how the learners went about clarifying points or elaborating. It was envisaged that the manner and the extent to which expansion or elaboration was made, would be reflected in the linguistic forms which would be used in those speech acts. Narrative compositions involved longer discussions than descriptive compositions and were thus likely to evoke more complex lexical and syntactical features than the descriptive ones. How the learners worked in the classroom was also expected to reveal the structure of the discourse, although this depended on the cooperation of members of a pair or a group in bringing it about. The subjects' views on pair work and group

work in interviews varied, though generally, most of the students showed a preference for working in larger groups (group work) rather than in small ones (pair work) because they felt that there was a diversity of views in group work and also because it is possible to compare points of view in group work.

The views of both the student respondents and the teacher respondents as regards the modality of working in the classroom for language tasks did not show a consistent pattern, apparently because the subjects had basically not been frequently exposed to ways of learning other than the teacher-fronted approach. The pupils' views as regards the input they get from both their teachers and fellow pupils further suggest how teacher-controlled lessons may have made pupils regard the knowledge of language forms as being much more important than knowledge of the content ( or fluency) in writing. The pupils' views on the use of group work also show a variation in views although the general consensus seems to be that group work rather than pair work seems to be ideal. This might be interpreted as suggesting that pupils do not find themselves at ease in learning in pairs, perhaps because they can hardly discuss much in pairs because of the obvious language difficulty. In this connection too, are the teachers' views which seem to cast some doubt on the teacher's use of group work not because teachers find group work to be useless but because teachers feel they are too constrained by the requirements of the syllabus and their large classes to use group work as a teaching methodology.

### **8.2.7 Summary of results of the study in relation to the projected hypotheses**

The results of this study may therefore, be briefly summed up and related to the hypotheses which were projected in Chapter One thus:

- (a) There is a direct relationship between some patterns of interaction that take place in the pre-writing discussions and the quantity and quality of the lexical and syntactical features of the compositions. The scarcity of clarifications, requests for clarifications and reasoning acts was for example, directly related to the virtual lack of causal, temporal and adversative conjunctions which made the compositions lack coherence
- (b) Most of the subjects incorporated features of oral language into written language after the discussion, thus proving the hypothesis that language generated in the discussion affected the compositions.

However, since these language features were usually additive conjunctions or deictics (demonstratives), they did not contribute a great deal to the coherence of the composition or show much conformity to the conventions of the written medium. What matters therefore, is not simply the quantity of the language forms but the quality of the language forms that will contribute to the good quality of the composition.

- (c) There was some relationship between the nature of the tasks and the quantity as well as the quality of the language features generated. The narrative group work which employed the most speech acts, not only had more words (tokens) but also a greater variety of these words (word types) than the descriptive task, as well as more complex sentences and more subordinate clauses. There also seems to have been a relationship between the task and the way the class was organized for the task and the language features generated.

The teacher-fronted descriptive task, for instance, seemed to be predisposed towards the generation of compound sentences rather than complex sentences and it was also significantly correlated with a preponderance of reference ties (pronouns and demonstratives). This would tend to suggest that the teacher-led activities which had a substantial amount of Giving Information/Explaining speech acts as well as questions, may have led to short answers which involved joining a simple sentence with a conjunction to form a compound sentence. Such sentences are in consonance with the requirements of classroom talk which due to time constraint, may not often tolerate long answers as the teacher has to nominate others to reply. This aspect of classroom discourse is likely to affect writing done in teacher-led lessons. The preponderance of reference pronominals in the descriptive task may also be related to the teacher referring often and directly to subjects or objects in the picture that formed the basis of the task.

It is also worth mentioning in this context that the results of this study do not show pair work as an ideal context for the generation of speech acts which could contribute to writing. Pair work did not generate linguistic forms that were contributory to the cohesiveness of subsequent text either and was surpassed in this respect by the teacher-fronted descriptive task and the narrative group work, thus raising doubts about the efficacy of pair work as an inefficient way of involving pupils, particularly low proficiency pupils in communicative tasks.

### 8.3 Limitations of the study

Despite an attempt by this study to highlight the features of interaction that take place prior to writing and how the social context of learning shapes the language of written compositions, the study is not without its limitations. The first limitation of this study is as regards the sample. I believe that the data of the study would have yielded substantially more revealing results if the sample had been big and spread across as many parts of the country as possible. The sample was small and was confined to one geographical area. Although secondary school students in one school in Tanzania will be found to have come from different regions, the social and cultural context in which the various schools are located may affect the way learners participate in lessons differently. A survey of different classes in a different area might have yielded different results.

The coding of speech acts appears an intractable problem. Some speech acts overlap (Aston, 1986; Corsaro, 1977). Clarification acts may for instance, go hand in hand with and probably be brought about by repetition or even questions. On the other hand, coding these speech acts it is always likely to be beset with the problem of whether to code the speech acts on the basis of what the learner seems to imply/intend or on the basis of one's understanding of what the speech act is actually doing, something which may not be easy to distinguish from the verbal exchanges heard over a tape recorder. The intuition of the researcher in coding speech act categories may not be reliable especially when the researcher is faced with a substantial amount of verbal data. The level of linguistic competence could also determine the ease or the difficulty of recognizing and coding a particular speech act. It was for instance, difficult to identify which speech act a student was engaged in when he spoke incomprehensibly or simply uttered a single word or a simple sentence, and what had to be done was to use intuition and understanding of what the interlocutor might have meant, to assign the proper coding to a speech act.

It is often assumed that once utterances in which speech acts occur have been formed, the negotiation of meaning has been attained. Varonis and Gass (1985) and Aston (1986) refer to "non-understanding routines" which are entered into by learners when they cannot understand each other. Varonis and Gass (1985:73) regard them as "those exchanges in which there is some indication that understanding between participants has not been complete".

Aston (1986) calls them "trouble shooting" routines. These are features such as confirmation requests which may, after all not be so much concerned with the negotiation of meaning as with merely continuing the conversation. The mere presence of a discourse/speech act should, therefore, not be taken as a measure of the success of the interaction. What is at stake is the extent to which the speech act helps to break the barrier to communication and pave the way for real negotiation of meaning. As Aston (1986: 140) puts it:

...the frequency of use of the discourse procedure for trouble shooting may relate more closely to a general perception of difficulty of interaction than to specific occurrences of trouble. Thus what the use of these procedures achieves - from the point of view I am taking here - is not primarily or necessarily a negotiation of comprehensible input, but display of the mutual satisfactoriness - notwithstanding difficulties - of the interaction. These procedures thus may contribute as much to maintain rapport as to achieve correct understanding of utterances.

The frequency of discourse/speech acts thus statistically states how often a speech act occurs without explaining the social context which may have brought about that speech act. The assumption that a particular speech act is likely to generate a particular linguistic form is also open to debate because the learner could, before making an utterance, be aware or unaware of the linguistic form in which he will encode the speech act. Apparently, learners do not think first of a speech act before they utter a statement. The utterance may be dictated much more by what the speaker thinks is the right word to use as well as other factors than the speech act in which the word appears. Stubbs (1983: 86)) underscores this point when he states that

Discourse obviously displays recurrent linguistic patterns but these might be the result of non-linguistic organization: the result, for example, of much more general characteristics of human thinking and problem solving.

The context in which the speech act was uttered as well as the intention of the participants in the speech act may thus help to cast light on how or why certain lexical and syntactic forms emerged. Recognizing the intention of the participants becomes difficult, if not inaccurate, in a situation where subjects - like most of the subjects of this study - are unable to sustain a conversation and state clearly what they want to say. Furthermore, the Hawthorne effect on the teachers as well as the students as a result of the researcher's presence, cannot be ruled out, especially during the initial lessons when the students were excited about recording their voices in the tape recorder. Similarly, the teachers may have artificially allowed more participation of the students in

teacher-fronted lessons than they would normally do or they may have appeared to show that their pupils were used to the tasks that were assigned when they actually were not

Another quantitative aspect of the data analysis which is subject to debate, is the counting of frequencies of cohesive devices as a measure of the poor quality or good quality of a composition. As mentioned in the previous chapter, merely counting the number of reference devices, reiteration or ellipsis devices, may not necessarily ensure that cohesion is present, as some of the devices may be used in sentences which do not state propositions logically. As I pointed out in Chapter Seven, cohesion analysis as a device for measuring the quality of compositions does not seem to be suitable for measuring the quality of low proficiency or elementary learners since most of the texts of such learners lack rhetorical structure and even coherence, demonstrated, for example, by the lack of punctuation and paragraphs.

Jafarpur (1991) in his study of the cohesion of compositions of learners of differing proficiency, found that the writing quality showed a substantial relationship with cohesion only for the compositions of advanced level subjects. This led him to argue that cohesive elements are useful only with high proficiency learners since the compositions of less proficient learners are not pieces of coherent writing. Allard and Ulatowska (1991:75) on the other hand, argue that simple pieces of writing such as descriptive writing and narrative writing could dispense with conjunctions without making the text appear incoherent .

...relationship among parts of a text often will be clear even if not explicitly marked using conjunctions or other devices. In a simple narrative or procedure, the relations between most sentences are of a temporal, or more specifically of sequential nature. These will be understood regardless of whether a temporal connector then or next is used.

This study might have revealed an obvious variety in the use of cohesion devices if it had been conducted among Form Six students or First Year university students who are more likely to produce more coherent texts. I also think that the variables that were analyzed might even have been too many for one to get a clear analysis. It is hoped that in future, a study carried out along these lines could concentrate on one or two factors. The researcher might, for instance, look into how the interactional features prior to writing are related to the generation of grammatical cohesion (conjunctions) or lexical cohesion

(substitution or ellipsis) or confine himself/herself to looking merely at the syntactic features generated by the interactions both in the oral discourse and in compositions. It is also to be hoped that the analysis of compositions will go beyond looking at the quantitative features of cohesion, and attempt to establish a basis for examining the coherence of compositions.

Hasan (1984), in an attempt to improvise the cohesion analysis categories embodied in *Cohesion in English*, introduced a supplementary cohesion measure called "*cohesive harmony*", since it shows how harmoniously or effectively, a cohesive device can be used in a text. Cohesive harmony, which is a rather complex measure because it does not involve merely looking at the cohesion devices but involves the counting of "interactive chains", is based on Halliday and Hasan's (1976) and Halliday's (1985b) work on functional grammar.

Hasan (1984) sees ideas, themes and events developed by a writer, in terms of related chains within which are ideas that together develop a topic. A few studies have extended the early concept of cohesion devices to embody cohesive harmony (Rentel, 1988; Yang, 1989; Cox, Shanahan and Sulzby, 1990). These studies reinforce further the idea that what matters is not the mere counting of cohesive devices but how those cohesive devices have been employed to create cohesive harmony which, unlike the simple count of cohesive devices "can account for the extent of the complex linking that writers use and that readers must interpret" (Cox, Shanahan and Sulzby, 1990:52). The counting of correctly used and incorrectly used cohesion devices in this study was simply based on whether the cohesion device used was in the appropriate form or not and whether or not it brought about a logical relationship between sentences. The cohesive harmony analysis is probably a more comprehensive measure, the exclusion of which may have rendered the cohesion analysis employed in this study incomplete, though not inaccurate or unreliable.

Since English is the medium of instruction in secondary schools, the study of compositions could in future be based on the writing of school subjects such as Biology, Physics or History. It might be interesting to see how the language employed by the teachers of these subjects as they interact with their students, and the language of the students, help the latter to understand those subjects. This could be a step in a useful direction since one of the major reasons - if not the most important reason - why secondary school pupils do badly is that they

cannot write well because they cannot understand the English of the school subjects as they listen to their teachers to say nothing of the language of the textbooks.

Transcribing any of conversational data is not only tedious but complex (Stubbs, 1983; Tizard and Hughes, 1984) and becomes much more difficult because the researcher has to write down words as they are uttered. The verbatim account becomes difficult when there are many incomprehensible words in the data. The difficulty is compounded when transcription begins. The researcher is faced with two problems during the transcription stage. The researcher may be unable to make out the meaning of the word and fail to arrive at an interpretation of the data. On the other hand the researcher has to strive to understand the context in which his subjects were working and even attempt to have a knowledge of the idiosyncratic utterances made by his subjects, to be able to code the speech appropriately.

One of the assumptions of this study has been that the language features of the oral discussions (verbal interactions) would be discernible in the written compositions. Language features do not occur in isolation from the content of the written product and it should, therefore, be assumed that both the content and the language features of the verbal exchanges would be incorporated into the written compositions. This assumption may be based on the notion that at the elementary level, children who have not yet acquired the conventions of written discourse, will tend to put down on paper, words that they speak out. Such an assumption is belied by the fact that writing is not simply the putting down of words on paper, but is also a cognitive activity that is very much influenced by mental processes that could be going on unnoticed by the participants of the verbal interaction.

Among the reasons attributed to children's poor performance in composition writing are "the short term memory loss" due to slow production of writing and "the mechanical demands" of writing (Scardamalia, Bereiter and Goelman; 1982:208) especially among small children who have to wrestle with pencils and pens during the initial stages of writing. Scardamalia, Bereiter and Goelman (1982) argue that, whereas composing orally may simply be a spoken representation of what was thought, writing makes a further demand of representing that spoken thought coherently so that the reader can understand it.



A number of studies have been done to ascertain how much children can remember and write down of what they have heard (stories) and of what they have heard and later put down in dictation writing - (Sulzby, 1982; Hildyard and Hidi, 1982; Pontecorvo and Zuccheromaglio, 1989). Others have been studies on the pupils' ability to remember and write down what they have just read (Johnson, 1977; Konopak, Martin and Martin, 1990). Hildyard and Hidi (1985) for instance, found that children were able to recall a story better after writing it than after reading it, thus showing that when original production is writing, recall is much better than when production is oral. Martin, Konopak, and Martin (1986), however, found that pupils who first read and then wrote, remembered better than those who simply read and retold the story, and Sulzby (1982) found that children who were high in reading related activities easily adapted the dictations read out to them to the written mode, whereas those who were of low reading abilities told the stories in the conversational mode.

What these studies show is simply that writing which is integrated with the learner's past experiences of getting information through reading, is much more effective than decontextualized writing. This would seem to suggest that some future investigation might look at the effect that multiple readings of particular types of written composition might have on subsequent written performance. I would argue that talking and listening can supplement reading as a strategy for encouraging writing, though whether children are able to or not able to relate their writing effectively to what transpires in their talk, will depend on the way the talk is structured and monitored. This brings me to the issue of how verbal protocols collected after verbal interaction, can be used as a reliable measure for casting light on what happens to the written products.

In their long critique of verbal protocol as an instrument for measuring the learner's performance of tasks, Ericsson and Simon (1980) argue that verbalization may not necessarily portray what the researcher thinks is relevant to his data. Verbalization may omit information that subjects use to perform tasks and verbalization could also interfere with the retrieval of information. The authors argue that this impediment posed by verbal data may happen when subjects are working under such a heavy cognitive load that they even stop verbalizing altogether. This trend was observed among the subjects of this study, who invariably fell silent because of loss of words and so decided to break up their groups and start writing. On the other hand, what the subjects verbalize may not necessarily be what they put down on paper. This was especially the case with low achievers (the LPs) who may not have understood

what their interlocutors said. The more proficient students (the HPs) also seemed to mistrust their colleagues who were not as good as they were (the LPs) and avoided using words or expression they had used together in the oral discussions. On the contrary, the HPs were ready to incorporate words they had heard from or they had been discussing with their HPs counterparts.

## **8.4 Pedagogical implications of the study**

### **8.4.1 Implications for classroom tasks**

The findings of this study have their implications for classroom tasks, particularly composition writing tasks. The nature of the tasks in this study has been that they have been instrumental in compelling communication by making each pupil have some information which he shares with a colleague or information which he has but which, by making it accessible to another learner, makes it possible for the two to interact. However, since communication takes place through language and in language, interest arises as regards what aspects of the learner's language the tasks will promote. Descriptive tasks were, for instance, seen as contributing to the generation of simple and compound sentences as the tasks did not involve substantial interactions and long turns whereas the narrative tasks tended to generate complex sentences as denoted by a good number of embedded clauses as well as the greater number of word types than the descriptive compositions. The utility of these exercises can thus be said to be not only for promoting interaction but also for generating discourse acts which give rise to the language generated. How the linguistic knowledge that is tailored to the discourse was employed is thus important in considering which exercises to set but of equal importance is also the manner in which the classroom was organized to carry out these tasks.

### **8.4.2 Implications for organizing classrooms for ESL learning**

From the student and teacher questionnaires, it has been learned that pupils and teachers do not seem to agree much on the benefits accruing from pair work/group work while among the pupils themselves there is lack of consistency as regards whether it is pair work or group work which they find useful for language learning. Teachers see the large classes and particularly the fact that teaching is dictated by the syllabus as constraints on the organization of group work which appears to take up much of the teacher's time. All innovations, be they political or educational, have to take into account the socio-cultural and linguistic situations obtaining in the country. While

writing an interesting composition could involve a discussion prior to writing, not all writing can be said to call for discussion. We are living in a world where personal decisions have to be taken at times without consultation and working individually at times would be a preparation for individual decision making in life after school

The cognitive and linguistic constraints faced by the pupils as they carry out the tasks can make teachers decide whether to organize the classes as pairs or groups depending on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the types of groups organized. Pair work has, for instance, been seen from the findings not to be helpful to the LPs when they are paired with LP counterparts because of their inability to interact in the target language, while the study tends also to show that where there is a domination of the group by the HPs the LPs are at a disadvantage. In such contexts, it is the teacher's discretion rather than what a language learning theory postulates, that will make the teacher decide whether to use pair work or group work. This will involve modifying the task to suit the learners' abilities as well as the conditions prevailing in the classroom. Flexibility and taking into account the prevailing conditions in our society should be the guiding criteria for adoption of a methodology. As Bygate (1988: 390) states:

Methodologies and the theories of language learning cannot immunize themselves from consideration of what learners do, any more than an understanding of what learners do is possible without reference to theory.

Considering the difference in age at which children in England and Tanzania go to school, for instance, it can be rightly said that a communicative exercise done by a ten year-old British child could be linguistically appropriate to a 16 year-old Tanzanian pupil who happens to be in the same class level, but be culturally inappropriate and therefore a hindrance to his comprehension. It has to be accepted however, that irrespective of the socio-cultural differences among people or countries, they all need to communicate and hence the need for using language to promote communication rather than for its own sake becomes paramount. The rapid spread of technology with its attendant need for advanced communication means that those who fail to communicate will be disadvantaged as they will be denied access to their rights and needs which can be easily gained if one knows the language used in the community. Communicative tasks in the classroom are, thus a significant step in using language to attain one's needs and to participate in nation building.

While the teacher's role in the classroom will continue to be paramount, there is a need to give pupils the opportunity to learn and solve problems meaningfully even if this means at times working on their own. Classroom studies reveal that classroom discourse is usually teacher-dominated (Flanders 1970; Stubbs 1976). There is therefore, a need to create a balance between teacher led lessons and lessons in which the pupils will be able to help one another solve problems. It appears from these results that not all activities can be conducted in pairs or groups. Activities which do not appear challenging and which do not lead to the pupils sharing information or experience, could continue to be done in teacher-fronted lessons but those which allow learners the opportunity to share information and engage in problem solving, can be done in either pairs or groups depending on the complexity of the task.

It is hoped that the findings of the study will encourage teachers to assign language activities and particularly writing activities, that are not only aimed at reinforcing the structures learned in previous lessons, but treat language basically as a means of communication. Oral brainstorming activities can thus be resorted to as a prelude to reading and writing. In this way, talking will be seen not as one of the language skills, but as an integral part of language learning. There is an acute shortage of textbooks that are based on current language teaching methodologies, and it tends to be natural and somewhat accepted that teachers follow the methods by which they were themselves taught at school.

It is hoped that the study may go some way towards showing how teachers can give assignments that promote communication and independent problem solving. If the syllabus and textbooks for English language teaching are written with a view to promoting communication, then teacher-student, and student-student interaction will be promoted. Grammar will, of course, continue to be taught as part of the communication process that is promoted by the exercises. If properly executed, the exercises will generate interest in language learning in those pupils who may hate learning English because of the learning of 'grammar' at which they fail.

#### **8.4.3 Implications for ESOL syllabus design**

The integrating of language skills basically means that the teaching of a skill does not have to wait until the previous language skill has been taught as stipulated in the syllabus. The integration of language skills may seem a rather demanding task to teachers who are already overburdened with a lot of

periods, but it can be carefully worked out and implemented. It is now widely acknowledged that a pupil who engages in a literary skill requiring some high level thinking (such as writing), may do it better after engaging in talking or reading that is related to the same task. This integration of new information with one's previous experience is seen as a basis for promoting literacy (Konopak, Martin and Martin, 1990; Sulzby, 1982). We may thus not have to necessarily wait until the pupil has mastered grammar or reading before we can teach him to write. In view of the fact that speaking does not seem to be given prominence in the Tanzania's English Language curriculum, it is worth considering the extent to which speaking could contribute to the learning of English.

Wilkin's (1976) conception of the notional language syllabus incorporates the functions of language in real life situations and seems to have attracted quite a lot of attention particularly in Europe, and led to the formulation of the Threshold Level syllabus. One part of the syllabus is based on functions of language such as Requesting and Giving Information, Expressing Thought Processes, Expressing Opinions and Expressing Judgments. These functions of language conform to speech act categories since they relate to those aspects of day-to-day utterances. The sequences of lexical and grammatical items are fitted into the semantic framework as vehicles for the communication of these notions. Finocchiaro (1979:12) states this about the notional-functional syllabus:

It recognizes that while the language used in any speech act should be based on the situation or setting in which it occurs and be grammatically correct and semantically appropriate, the speaker must, above all, have a real purpose for speaking and something to talk about. The act of communication, even at elementary levels will be intrinsically motivating simply because it expresses basic universal communicative functions of language and because it makes use of notions (the term used for the semantic themes and language items) that are most appropriate to complete the specific functions being expressed.

The notional functional approach is thus a shift from - though not a rejection of - preoccupation with the structure and setting, to the communicative purposes of speech acts. However, the teaching of language on the basis of these acts may need to be carried out with care since the linguistic forms for expressing these acts may not be universally acknowledged as they could have some cultural implications in other countries. Hence, the teaching of forms of requests, for example, such as "I wonder if you might know the way to the railway station" would be regarded as proper in Britain but probably be superfluous or even absurd in some other countries. It is evident, however, that there are many speech acts

that are universally understood to perform similar functions wherever English is spoken. These should be taught and internalized by the students as they communicate among themselves. Of equal importance is the way students are able to transfer their knowledge of speech acts to writing which is important to them both in the English lesson and in other subjects.

Knowledge of and application of speech acts to writing can be attained by teaching learners and encouraging them to discover expressions that show personal opinions, request information or make judgements. Similarly, knowledge of speech acts can be put to use in writing by drawing students' attention to passages in reading comprehension in which general statements, arguments, clarifications and expansions of points have been made. This can help students to realize the importance of making use of the same features while writing summaries and making notes.

## **8.5 Conclusion**

This study was conceived on the premise that teacher-student, student-student interactions would have a role to play on the subsequent writing activities following the verbal interactions. Based on discourse/speech acts as the basic patterns of interaction, the results of the study have shown that oral discussions related to both the descriptive and the narrative tasks seem to show some common interactional patterns. However, the study has also shown that the narrative genre, for instance, generates such acts as clarification requests, and expansions or elaborations which are not generated in the descriptive compositions, thus revealing that although the tasks may have some common interactional patterns, there are certain interaction patterns which tend to occur more in particular tasks.

The study has also revealed that the difference in the complexity of the tasks, affects learners of different language abilities differently. The way in which the class is organized for carrying out the tasks, also affects both the lexico-syntactical features of the language used for carrying out these tasks and the outcomes of the written compositions that follow the verbal interactions. The transfer of language forms from the verbal interactions to written compositions, was not manifested clearly because of the constraints of ability to use the language - especially among the LPs - and some of the learners' lack of confidence in or inability to internalize the language forms that appeared in their colleagues' speech. The lexico-syntactical features generated by the subjects of this study were, to some extent, affected by the nature of the task but

the difference in the complexity of these linguistic features was not great in view of the generally low level of competence in English of most of the pupils. The difference in the cohesion devices for example, illustrate the impact the differences in the ability of the learners as well as the different tasks, may have on both the oral mode and the written mode.

It is evident, however, that because of the low linguistic proficiency of the subjects, not much difference emerged between the spoken mode and the written mode. The results do, nevertheless, indicate that there are lexical and syntactical features which owe their presence to social interactions, thus underscoring the importance of social interaction in literacy activities and among EFL/ESL learners, however much they may lack proficiency in the target language.

Perhaps it should be made clear from the outset that I do not claim that the tasks used in this study are the only ones that could promote interaction in the classroom and that other types of composition exercises are unsuitable, nor is the study an attempt to suggest an overhaul of current teaching methodologies in Tanzania without taking cognizance of the concrete conditions prevailing in the educational sector in general and the country's socio-economic position in particular. The attempt was to merely illustrate how learners are able to interact when working on such exercises and how the ensuing interactions could help the learners to write. Exercises in which learners write to correspond with others such as writing letters, telephone messages, postcards, sets of instructions - such as "how to look after my vegetable garden while I am away" - are other types of exercises in which the learner could interact with the reader meaningfully. The exploratory nature of the study gives scope for more to be unearthed as regards how our pupils learn and what they benefit from learning but it is also aimed at exhorting teachers and curriculum developers to attempt, despite the social and financial constraints schools encounter, to use resources that may be within reach to promote the teaching and learning of literacy skills that will lead to meaningfully communicative purposes.

It is hoped, therefore, that this exploratory study will generate further interest and research in the role of classroom discourse in learning English for communicative purposes and redirect the attention of teachers, curriculum developers and researchers from merely showing concern about what pupils speak or write and the fall in the 'standards' of English in Tanzania, to focussing on what happens in the classroom as students learn English as well. In this

way we may hope to gain a judicious understanding of why there are massive failures in English in primary schools and secondary schools and attempt to redress the shortcomings evidenced in both teaching and teaching materials as well as in the syllabus used as a basis for how we teach and for setting the tasks we give to our pupils, in Tanzania.



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## Appendix A

### The English Language Cloze Test

#### Instructions

Do not write on this paper.

At the top of the sheet of paper you have been given, write your name, your school and your form. Then write the numbers 1 to 51 in vertical columns leaving enough space to the right of each number to write a word.

In the following passage some words have been left out and replaced by a numbered blank space. Read through the whole passage to see what it is about. Then on the piece of paper you have been given, write opposite the number of the blank the words which have been left out. For example, the word which best suits blank number (1) is 'his' so on your piece of paper opposite (1) you write 'his' like this:

- |                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| (1) <u>his</u> | (26) _____ |
| (2) _____      | (27) _____ |
| (3) _____      | (28) _____ |
| etc.           | etc.       |

#### Why The Black Fly Buzzes

One day a man and his wife went into the bush to collect nuts. They found a palm tree with clusters of ripe nuts growing among the large green leaves, and telling his wife to wait below, the man soon climbed the tree, with his knife into his belt.

He was hacking away at the heavy clusters of palm nuts when a small black fly tickled his nose and tried to get into the corner of his eyes. As he hastily

brushed it away (1) \_\_\_\_\_ hand slipped, and the knife began (2) \_\_\_\_\_ fall.

"Look out!" he shouted.

The (3) \_\_\_\_\_ quickly leapt to one side so (4) \_\_\_\_\_ the knife missed her, but as (5) \_\_\_\_\_ did so she jumped over a (6) \_\_\_\_\_ that was sleeping under the dead (7) \_\_\_\_\_. The snake was so startled that (8) \_\_\_\_\_ dived into a rat's hole next (9) \_\_\_\_\_ the tree.

The poor rat in (10) \_\_\_\_\_ was so terrified that it ran (11) \_\_\_\_\_ of its hole, and up another (12) \_\_\_\_\_ on which a weaver bird had (13) \_\_\_\_\_. The bird thought that the rat (14) \_\_\_\_\_ after its eggs and was so (15) \_\_\_\_\_ that it started cackling. It cackled (16) \_\_\_\_\_ loudly that a monkey in another (17) \_\_\_\_\_ dropped the juicy mango he was (18) \_\_\_\_\_ onto the back of an elephant.

(19) \_\_\_\_\_ elephant thought that he was being (20) \_\_\_\_\_, and he rushed madly away, destroying (21) \_\_\_\_\_ bush-fowl's nest, and breaking all the (22) \_\_\_\_\_. "Kark !" squawked the poor mother bush-fowl. (23) \_\_\_\_\_ what you've done to my eggs". (24) \_\_\_\_\_ was so upset that she did (25) \_\_\_\_\_ make a sound for two days (26) \_\_\_\_\_ two nights.

Now every one knows that (27) \_\_\_\_\_ bush-fowl is always the first to (28) \_\_\_\_\_ among the wild creatures, and that (29) \_\_\_\_\_ sun hears her loud and (30) \_\_\_\_\_ cries, he rises from his bed (31) \_\_\_\_\_ a new day begins. But since (32) \_\_\_\_\_ bush-fowl was silently brooding over her (33) \_\_\_\_\_ she had not called the sun, (34) \_\_\_\_\_ the sky remained dark.

The other (35) \_\_\_\_\_ wondered why the daylight had not (36) \_\_\_\_\_ and cried out to the Great (37) \_\_\_\_\_ of the Heavens, asking him what (38) \_\_\_\_\_ happened.



So the Great Spirit summoned (39) \_\_\_\_\_ the animals together and even the (40) \_\_\_\_\_ had to answer his call.

The (41) \_\_\_\_\_ Spirit sternly demanded to know what (42) \_\_\_\_\_ happened. The man and the woman (43) \_\_\_\_\_ all the creatures then told him. (44) \_\_\_\_\_ Great Spirit accepted all that . The (45) \_\_\_\_\_ thing he wanted to know was (46) \_\_\_\_\_ the black fly had tickled the (47) \_\_\_\_\_. Instead of answering politely the fly (48) \_\_\_\_\_ said: "Buzz Buzz Buzz". The Great (49) \_\_\_\_\_ was angry. "Since you have refused (50) \_\_\_\_\_ answer my question I will not (51) \_\_\_\_\_ you to speak again, from now on you will only be able to buzz", and from that time he and his brothers have never said anything else but "Buzz Buzz Buzz".

**Appendix B**  
Cloze Test Scores

Form 2A

	School A	School B
Pupil No.	Marks (Out of 50%)	Marks (Out of 50%)
1.*	32	20*
2.*	29	19*
3.	26	14
4.	21	13
5.	19	12
6.	19	12
7.	17	11*
8.	15	11
9.*	14	11
10.*	13	10*
11.	15	10.
12.	11	09
13,	11	08
14.	10	08
15.	09	07
16.	08	06
17.	08	06
18.	08	06*
19.	08	03
20.*	07	01*
21.*	07	-
22.	07	-
23.	06	-
24.	06	-
25.	06	-
26.	06	-
27.	05	-
28.	02	-

\* The asterisk denotes the pupils who were selected as target pupils for this study

Mean and SD for all pupils

M	11.89	9.85
---	-------	------

SD	7.49	4.28
----	------	------

Mean and SD for target pupils (N= 6 in each class)

M	17	11.2
---	----	------

SD	10.8	6.05
----	------	------

### Form 2B

	School A	School B
Pupil's No.	Marks (Out of 50%)	Marks (Out of 50%)
1.*	20	37*
2.*	20	32*
3.*	20	27*
4.	15	27
5.	13	25
6.	11	24
7.	11	22
8.	10	21
9.*	08	21
10.	08	20
11.	08	19
12.	08	18
13.	08	15
14.	07	15
15.	06	14
16.	05	15
17.	05	14
18.*	03	14
19.*	02	13
20.	-	13
21.	-	12*
22.	-	10
23.	-	10

24.	-	10
25.	-	10
26.	-	10
27.	-	10
28.	-	10
29.	-	10
30.	-	07
31.	-	04*
32.	-	02*
Mean and SD for all pupils		
M	9.89	15.87
SD	5.30	7.75
Mean and SD for the target pupils (N= 6 in each class)		
M	12.2	19
SD	8.14	13.0

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## Appendix D

### Sample lesson Plan for the Model Descriptive Composition

Aim: To let pupils discuss and later write about the scenery in the picture.

Method: Whole class (Teacher-fronted ) oral/ aural approach to be followed later by discussions in pair work.

Presentation:

1. The teacher puts up the picture of the model composition and writes down on the blackboard , some cue words which the pupils are expected to use in their composition e.g. boat, oar, woman, house, fish, boy, men, tree, mountain, the river, to go, to paddle, to cook.
2. The teacher asks pupils questions about the model pictures on the board, urging them to use the cue words written on the blackboard and think about others, to describe the picture.
3. The teacher removes the picture from the notice board/ blackboard .
4. The teacher arranges the class in pairs, ready for the discussion in pairs, of the descriptive composition ('Find the difference') task on the basis of the model provided.
5. The teacher distributes small envelopes in which are the two sheets of paper; each having a picture with certain features missing, which the student has to explain to his colleague.
6. The pupils start discussing, remembering to write down the differences they note and then bringing them together to write a description of the scene.
7. Each pupil goes back to his desk after the discussion to write his composition.

Teacher's Activity/Activities

The teacher will present the lesson orally and let the pupils answer a few questions after which he/she will explain the modalities of writing a descriptive composition before he/she lets the pupils to sit in pairs (in accordance with the arrangement agreed on following the cloze test) and discuss the composition before each goes back to his desk to write it.

**Appendix D**  
Model Descriptive Composition  
(See Appendix C)

It is early in the morning and the sun is shining above the mountains. Two men are in a canoe in a river. One of them is rowing the canoe and the other is waving to the woman who is on the bank of the river. The woman is waving back to the man.

There are two grass-thatched houses beside the tree. The big house has a door and two windows and behind it is a small house which is also covered with grass.



**Appendix E – Picture for the TF Descriptive composition Task**

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It is early in the morning and the sun is starting to shining. There are two houses near the river and beside of houses there's a big tree. Among this there are three people, one of the two people they came from the ~~see~~ river to fishing a fish the one of this two he has a fish and the other he hasn't. At home there is a woman who cooks <sup>some</sup> food. About the houses, there is a big house in front of small house, the big house it has two windows and one door, ~~it was covered with grass~~ These houses were covered with grass. And along the houses there is a road which goes to the river. up to that I finished what I can see.

Appendix F - Sample essay of the TF Descriptive composition Task, No. 4.

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FIND THE DIFFERENCE

## Instructions

DO NOT OPEN THIS FOLDER UNTIL YOU HAVE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 In this folder you will find two envelopes. Take one each.
- 2 There is a picture in each envelope. Take your picture out of the envelope. DO NOT SHOW IT TO YOUR PARTNER.
- 3 Your picture is similar to that of your partner - but there are some differences. Talk to one another until you find (5) differences. On a piece of rough paper note down these 5 differences.
- 4 When you have found (5) differences, show your pictures to one another and compare them. Try to find more differences. Add these to the list on your rough paper.
- 5 Now, each of you must work separately but you may place the two pictures side by side. Write a description of the scene shown in the pictures combining all the information from both pictures. (about 100 words)

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Appendix H - Sample essay of the 'Find the Difference' Pair work  
Descriptive composition, composition No. 39

**Appendix H - Sample essay of the 'Find the Difference' Pair work**  
**Descriptive composition, composition No. 66**

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Appendix I – Pictures for the Teacher Presentation of the Model Narrative composition

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## Appendix J

### Model Narrative Composition (See Appendix I )

One day an old man with a long beard and wearing a wide brimmed hat was selling hats under a big tree. There were several hats in one basket which was in front of him and in another which was under the tree. Five monkeys whom he seemed not to notice were up in a tree. Two of them were sitting on a branch of a tree while one was swinging himself on the same branch. The rest of the monkeys were jumping from branch to branch.

The old man began to feel tired and went to sleep. When the monkeys noticed that he was asleep, they came to the ground and took some hats from the basket. He suddenly woke up and was shocked to find that some of the hats were missing. He angrily shook his fist at the monkeys who were now wearing his hat and imitating the way he was shaking his fist at them. The old man, thinking of what to do, scratched his head. The monkeys also scratched their heads, so the old man threw his hat on the ground. The monkeys also threw the hats on the ground.

**Appendix K - Pictures for the TF Narrative Composition Task**

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**Appendix L - Sample essay of the TF Narrative composition Task**

**Composition No. 78**

**Appendix M**

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Appendix N<sub>1</sub> - Sample Essay of the 'Complete It' Group work Narrative

Composition No. 79

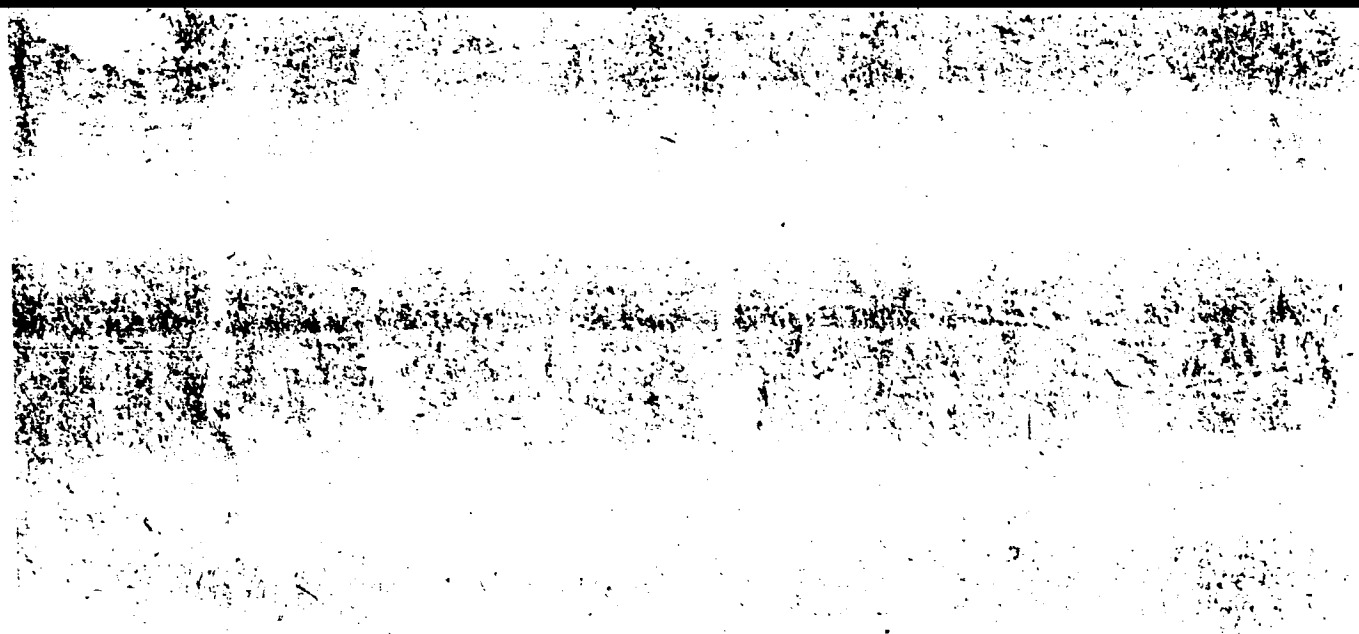
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## Appendix O1

### Key to the marking (scoring ) guide

The following suggested guide for the marking of the compositions requires that each marker should first give a global or impressionistic assessment of the compositions on the basis of Good, Average and Poor. The compositions will then be scored twice (if there are two markers) or thrice (if there are three markers) and a final average score will then be awarded.

The final score-to be arrived at by adding up the marks of the two or three scorers and then dividing the marks by the number of scorers-will be based on the following linguistic and rhetorical features:

1. Accuracy (spelling, punctuation and grammar). The latter should focus on tenses and the grammatical features the subjects may be expected to use in their compositions e.g. the use of the past tense for the narrative composition and the use of prepositional phrases (on the bank of the river, near the house) and the use of expressions like: there is, there are etc... in the descriptive composition.
2. Ability to use language to put ideas together coherently by using cohesive devices such as the conjunctions e.g. and, so, because, and the adverbial therefore, without making the composition sound boring to the reader.
3. Ability to maintain the flow of ideas and arguments by using as fair a number of complex constructions (through use of subordinate structures) as possible.
4. Ability to use words and expressions appropriately (i.e. as pertains to the nature of the composition).

TEN marks will be awarded for the composition. Four marks will be awarded for the content, three marks will be awarded for structure, and three marks will be awarded for the rhetorical organization of the composition.



## Appendix O2

### Composition tasks' scores

Scores (marks) in percentage (100%) for the compositions of target pupils in comparison with the scores of the whole sample.

(\*The target pupils are shown by an asterisk. The dash indicates that the subject did not write the composition due to absence from class)

Form 2A

Pupil No.	School A				School B			
	Descriptive		Narrative		Descriptive		Narrative	
	TF	PW	TF	GW	TF	PW	TF	GW
1.*	50	40	60	30	60	60	40	70*
2.*	50	30	60	70	20	30	30	40*
3.	50	20	40	20	30	40	20	20
4.	50	-	00	10	-	-	-	-
5.	40	30	-	50	50	20	20	-
6.	20	40	30	50	20	30	40	40
7.	10	10	20	10	-	20	60	10*
8.	10	20	40	50	-	-	40	50
9.*	30	10	20	-	20	20	30	-
10.*	20	30	-	30	20	40	40	50*
11.	70	-	-	50	-	-	60	-
12.	10	10	20	30	-	20	40	-
13.	-	30	10	-	-	30	40	60
14.	-	30	30	30	20	10	20	-
15.	40	30	-	50	-	-	-	-
16.	20	20	30	10	-	20	30	-
17.	20	10	30	20	-	-	-	-
18.	10	20	20	10	30	30	20	20*
19.	-	20	40	30	-	-	-	-
20*	-	20	30	40	-	00	10	.*
21*.	-	30	30	30				

22.	-	-	10	10
23.	-	20	40	20
24.	-	40	-	40
25.	10	20	20	-
26.	10	20	20	10
27.	20	30	30	40
28.	20	40	10	20

Mean	20	17.8	17.8	22.8	14	18.5	27	18
SD	18.2	9.3	9.3	17.9	10.9	12.8	13.0	19.8
For target pupils (N= 6 in each class)								
Mean	28.3	28.3	26.6	40	26.6	43.4	33.4	33.4
SD	17.3	8.2	17.3	16.4	30.8	21.9	21.9	24.5

## Form 2B

Pupil No.	School A				School B			
	Descriptive		Narrative		Descriptive		Narrative	
	TF	PW	TF	GW	TF	PW	TF	GW
1.*	70	30	-	70	60	80	-	.*
2.*	-	30	-	60	70	70	80	60*
3*	60	60	70	60	50	30	-	30*
4.	40	20	20	70	50	30	-	30
5.	30	20	30	40	-	-	-	-
6.	40	20	40	40	-	60	50	30
7.	30	30	40	40-	-	-	-	-
8.	40	40	30	40	-	20	-	40
9.*	20	-	30	30	40	30	40	30
10.	10	-	30	40	20	-	40	20
11.	60	50	40	30	-	20	30	40
12.	20	30	20	30	-	20	30	40
13.	-	30	30	-	-	40	40	20
14.	-	50	30	-	30	-	00	40
15.	20	40	40	30	40	40	50	50
16.	20	20	40	30	50	50	40	50

17.	-	30	-	-	30	20	-	20
18.*	10	20	30	30	-	30	30	40
19.*	-	30	-	20	30	40	10	-
20.					-	-	-	20
21.					-	30	30	30*
22.					50	-	50	30
23.					-	-	-	-
24.					40	20	-	20
25.					-	-	-	-
26.					-	-	30	30
27.					-	-	-	-
28.					40	40	40	30
29.					30	30	30	20
30.					20	-	-	30
31.					10	10	-	10*
32.					-	40	-	10*
Mean	24.7	20.3	25.3	34.7	20.6	24.4	24.1	25.9
SD	18.5	14.6	12.6	14.9	13.4	17.8	17.3	12.4
For the target pupils (N= 6 in each class)								
Mean	26.6	28.3	21.7	45	31.7	43.4	18.3	23.3
SD	26.4	17.3	28.3	18.7	30.5	21.9	34.9	20.6

1. **Discourse category/event:** The term 'Discourse category' is here used to indicate acts, including speech acts which help to realize the sequence of the responses and hence shape the interaction in the classroom. These acts have a functional purpose of helping us make meaning out of what an interlocutor says, for example: Requests for clarification as in the utterance, "What did you mean?"; or Acknowledging as in "OK, Mmh".

A Discourse event is an act performed during the lesson such as reading, writing or going to the blackboard, which again contributes to the interaction.

2. **Stage.** The stage of the lesson is the major unit of the structure of the lesson which manifests an internal generally consistent pattern of activity. Stages are often marked by boundary frames, discourse categories or events. They occur after one segment or a series of interrelated events and hence a stage will usually realize a new phase in the structure of a lesson. Stages may be labelled by such terms as : 'Introducing a lesson' or 'The teacher reviews the previous lesson' or 'Pair work' (The teacher arranges students in pairs), 'The conversation between pairs' A stage consists of one or more segments.

3. **Segment.** A segment is a constituent part of a lesson's activity or activities of the teacher and students which depicts how the activity or activities get sequenced or paced. A segment may consist of one or more discourse categories/events.

4. **Code.** A code is the language used during the course of the interaction, usually either English or Kiswahili (the national language).

5. **Time.** The units of time are minutes calculated to one decimal point. Hence, seconds have been converted into fractions of minutes.

ACTIVITY	DISCOURSE CATEGORY/ EVENT	CODE/ SYMBOL	DEFINITION
TALKING	1. Nominating	NO	Teacher/Student picks on a pupil to contribute to the discourse or say something.
	2. Questioning	Q	Asking a question
	2.1 High-level question	HLQ	A question requiring to explore and make inferences.
	2.2 Low-level question	LLQ	A leading question that calls for a respondent to confirm the previous utterance rather than elaborate it.
	3. Directing	DI	A statement or interrogative that

		requires an interlocutor to do as told. It is often non-linguistic and non-verbal.
3.1 Verbal oriented	D I V	A directive requiring a verbal response e.g. Tell Juma what you did.
3.2 Non-verbal	D I N	A directive requiring a non-verbal response e.g. Open your books.
4. Requesting	R E	A statement or interrogative asking the interlocutor to do something though he/she may be at liberty to do or not to do it.
4.1 Requesting for action	R A C	Request by which the teacher or fellow student lets the student/ fellow student to perform an action e.g. Let us arrange the pictures.
4.2 Request for information on content	R I C	Asking for or about subject/topic content.
4.3 Request for information on form	R I F	Asking about and wishing to get knowledge about syntax or vocabulary.
4.31 Request for clarification on form	R C F	Request for clarifying or confirming without necessarily adding new information on syntax,vocabulary or discourse structure.
4.3.2 Request for clarification on content	R C C	Request for clarifying,or confirming without necessarily adding new information on subject/topic.
4.3.3 Request for expansion/ elaboration	R E X	Request for an interlocutor to provide more information than that available in the text/task.
4.3.4 Request for evaluation	R E V	A request calling for a participant to approve or disapprove of someone or his activities e.g. Do you agree with what he says? . It may also be used to seek the interlocutor's consent to be corrected e.g. Let me correct your sentence / Can I correct your sentence?
5. Clarifying	C L	Making content of ssubject/topic or language clear or adding details
5.1 Clarifying content	C C	Teacher or student making content

		of subject matter/topic clear to student(s) or fellow group members
5.2 Clarifying form	C F	Making meaning of word/vocabulary or syntax clear
6. Expanding/Elaborating	E	Providing more information than that available in the text/task
7. Repeating	R P	Saying the same words as in previous utterance/speech. This is usually likely to happen if the interlocutor is interrupted or not responded to or if his/her response is inaudible or unaccepted. Repetitions may involve repeating other speech acts. Many repetitions have an evaluative function of accepting previous utterances or serving as signal that the speaker may continue talking. Repetitions may also simply be meant to secure the listener's attention.
7.1 Repeating framing	R P (F R)	Repeating a boundary word or utterance that shows the beginning or end of one's speech.
7.2 Repeating request for action	R P (R A C)	Repeating a statement that requires someone to do something
7.3 Repeating giving information on content	R P (G I C)	See below
7.4 Repeating giving information on form	R P (G I F)	See below
7.5 Repeating Evaluation	R P (E V)	Repeating an evaluation that is already made
7.6 Repeating request for evaluation	R P (R E V)	See above
7.7 Repeating Question	R P (Q)	See above
7.8 Repeating Word	R P (W)	Repeating one or more words/phrase
7.9 Repeating request for expansion or elaboration	R P (R E X)	See above
8 Giving information	G I	A statement that serves as response to an elicitation or an explanation about content or language form.
8.1 Giving information on	G I C	Explaining/Talking about subject

	content		matter
	8.2 Giving information on form	G I F	Explaining/Talking about structure or vocabulary
	8.3 Framing	F R	Using a word that relates to the preceding utterance and usually marks the boundary of utterance,i.e. showing the beginning of one and the end of another e.g. Well, Right, Now, Yaah.
	8.4 Completing	C P L	Finishing a clause or phrase began by previous speaker.
	9. Predicting/Reasoning/ Speculating	P R/S P/ S R	Drawing conclusions and stating cause and effect. Speculating is usually shown by such expressions as : I think, maybe etc...whereas predicting refers to the future.For reasoning the interlocutor should state why he thinks something happens.
	10.1 Evaluation/ Confirmation	E V	An utterance that shows the teacher's or the student's recognition of the previous speaker's non-requestive utterance so as to sustain a conversation. It is thus an indirect assessment of how relevant or useful the previous utterance is.
	10.2 Apologizing	A P L	-
	11. Acknowledging	A C K	Confirming having heard student's response e.g. OK/Okay,Right
LISTENING	12. Listening	L	-
	12.1 Listening to teacher talking	L T	-
	12.3 Listening to student talking	L S	-
	12.4 Listening to teacher reading	L T R	-
	12.5 Listening to student reading	L S R	-
READING	13. Reading	R	-
	13.1 Reading silently	S R	-
	13.2 Reading to class aloud	R A	-

	13.3 Reading aloud to pair or group	RAG	-
WRITING	14. Writing	W	-
	14.1 Writing while talking	W T	Composing aloud and writing at the same time
	14.2 Writing to dictation	W D	Writing down what the other student or group member says or reads out
	14.3 Writing silently or individually	W S	Writing at one's desk after a discussion or following the teacher's lesson ( in teacher-fronted lesson ).
DOING	15. Doing	DO	Any non-linguistic (non-verbal) event that is a response to a non-verbal oriented directive.
	15.1 Going to the board	GB	-
	15.2 Going to the teacher's desk	GT	-
	15.3 Teacher moving to	T M	-
	15.4 Student(s) moving to or away from group	SMG	-
	15.5 Student moving to another student	S M S	-
	15.6 Handing out exercise	HE	-
	15.7 Handing out writing paper	H P	-
	15.8 Collecting written exercise	CE	-
	15.9 Dismissing class	DC	-
	16. Obeying teacher's directive	OD	Doing non-verbally what the teacher directs the class to do e.g. writing or forming pairs/groups.





[illegible]

[illegible][illegible]

## Appendix Q

### Key to the Transcription of Audio-Tape Recordings

The following transcription symbols have been used in the exchanges:

-	Hesitation or pause that lasts for less than a second
/./	A one second pause. A dot represents duration of the pause in seconds after an utterance. It also shows the silence that prevails before an interlocutor responds to a question
/..5./	A five-second pause. Hence the numbers 6,7, etc. indicate the number of seconds in the pause
/?/	Unintelligible or inaudible words or phrases
(...)	At the end of the text, signifies incomplete utterance
[ ]	Overlap or simultaneous speech
Ss	Both/All students in pair/group or in the teacher-fronted classroom responding
Sx,y,z, etc.	Unknown speaker. Used when it becomes difficult to identify the speaker in pair/group or in the classroom

The columns that appear before each transcription represent the stages and segments of the lesson and the exchanges that occur in these stages/segments as follows:

Column 1:	Stage
Column 2	Segments
Column 3:	Discourse acts
Column 4:	Exchange

## Appendix R

### Transcriptions of Audiotape recordings

#### i. Tape transcript of the Teacher-fronted Descriptive Composition, Form 2A, School A.

1	01	The teacher puts up pictures of the model descriptive composition and asks students a few questions before putting the descriptive composition task pictures (4 mins)	
	02	The teacher removes the model composition pictures and puts up the composition-task pictures instead. He asks questions about the pictures (3.1 mins)	
2	03	Tape transcript (17.2 mins)	
	LLQ	0001T:	What can you see in the picture?
		0002S1:	/?/
	SP LLQ	0003T:	It can be a bird - what else can you see yes /..5../ yes
	NO DIN		sit down (he tells the student who offers to answer the question
	GIC	0004S2:	I can see the river
	RPWNO	0005T:	I can see the river - another one, yes (with a rising intonation)
	GIC	0006S3:	I can see a hill
	RCC	0007T:	You can see (with a rising intonation)
	GIC	0008S3:	a hill
	GIC	0009S4:	I can see two person- in the boat
	GIC NO	0010T:	He can see two persons in the boat - another one yes (with a rising intonation)
	GIC	0011S5:	I can see a way
	RCC	0012T:	you can see (the last word is uttered in a rising intonation)
	GIC	0013S5:	a way
	RCC	0014T:	a way (with a rising intonation)
	ACK	0015S5:	yes /..18../ (A student is allowed to enter the classroom)
	NO LLQ	0016T:	another one-what can you see - there are so many things in the picture - you can even make sentences on the picture /..5../
	GIC		

GIC	0018S6:	He can see a window - only one window (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0019S6:	two windows
GIC	0020T:	He can see two windows yes
GIC	0021S1:	I can see the sun
GIC	0022T:	He can see the sun the sun
GIC	0023S8:	I can see the ways of the hill
RCC	0024T:	You can see the (with a rising intonation)
RP (GIC)	0025S8:	the ways of the hill
GIC FR HLQ REP (Q)	0026T:	the waves - he says he can see the waves of the river well - now what time do you think this picture was drawn - a what time of the day do you think this picture shows yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0027S10:/..10../	it was in the morning
GIC	0028T:	He says it - it shows that it was in the morning /..5../
HLQ		the picture shows that it was in the morning why?
DIN NO		why do you think that it was during the morning time /.../ (he tells a student who has just entered the classroom to sit quietly as the lesson in being audiotaped) yes /.../what makes you think that it was it is during the morning time?
RS	0029S9:	/..6../ because you see the sun shining far east
GIC REX DIN LLQ NO	0030T:	/..5../ He says that he can see the sun shining far east -is that enough - to tell you that it is during the morning /.../ yes speak something /..17../ what is the man doing? what is the man doing? /.../ yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0031S10:	/?/ [ he is ] fishing the fish
RP(W) LLQ NO	0031aT:	[ he is ] what is that man doing? yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0032S2:	He is fishing the fish
HLQ	0033T:	What makes you think that this man is fishing? Another picture interpretation - what is he doing yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0034S2:	/.../ He is greeting the ones who are in the boat
EV GIC LLQ RP(Q)	0035T:	yes he says tha he is greeting the ones who are in the boat what are the men in the boat doing? what are they doing? yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0036Sx:	They are fishing the fish

RP (GIC) REV LLQ NO	0037T:	/..15../ They are - he says that they are fishing fish- is that a correct interpretation? /..11../ what is he is doing? yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0038S11:	/.../ He is greeting the ones who are in the boat
EV RP (GIC) LLQ	0039T:	yes he says that he is greeting the ones who are in the boat what are the men in the boat doing? what are they doing? yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0040Sy:	They are fishing the fish
FR GIC	0041T:	/..15../ They are - he says that they are fishing fish - is that a correct interpretation?
GIC	0042S11:	They are paddle
LLQ	0043T:	They are (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0044S11:	They are paddle
GIC LLQ RP(Q) LLQ RP(Q) RP(W) LLQ NO	0045T:	They are paddling are they paddling what is this man doing? What is this man doing? /..29../ anyway where are they where are they two men here - where are they yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0046S:	are in the boat
RCC	0047T:	they (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0048S3:	They are in the boat
RP(GIC) GIC RP(GIC) LLQ	0049T:	They are in the boat - he says that they are in the boat /.../ he says that the two men are in the - boat what is this? (he points at the picture with his stick)
GIC	0050S12:	It is a tree
LLQ RP(Q)	0051T:	What is the tree? Where is the tree?
GIC	0052Sz:	It is in the (.....)
NO	0053T:	yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0054S13:	It is near the house
RP(GIC) RP(GIC) LLQ RP(Q)	0055T:	The tree is near the house. The tree is near the house. Is it near the is it near one house?
GIC	0056S13:	No it is near the two house houses
RP(GIC) LLQ RP(Q)	0057T:	It is near the two houses . Where is this man standing? Where is this man standing yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0058S4:	/..5../ He is standing near the way

GIC RCF	0059T:	He is standing near the way /..5../ or you can say (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0060S4:	He is standing near the river
RP(GIC) RCF	0061T:	He is standing near the river - what we call a place which is near the river? yes (with a rising intonation)
CF	0062S14:	a bank
DIN	0063T:	Make a full sentence
GIC	0064S14:	It is called a bank
RP(GIC) REV	0065T:	so he is standing in the bank of the river (he stresses the last word) of the (.....) isn't it?
EV	0066Ss:	yes
FR HLQ RP(Q) ACK	0067T:	now what is he doing if he is standing on the bank of the river what is he doing /..23../ yes (a student knocks at the door and is admitted to enter)
GIC	0068S4:	he call the two person who who /?/ the river
LLQ	0069T:	he is (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0070Sv:	he call the two person who paddle the river
LLQ RP(Q) RP(Q) RP(Q) LLQ RP(Q) GIC	0071T:	Is he calling the two persons who are paddling - is he calling them? /..9../ is he calling them /..8../ is he calling them (with a rising intonation) /.../ what is he doing? /..5../ What is he doing? /..6../ I am not writing the answer
GIC	0072S4:	He is standing to wait the fish
GIC REV RP (REV)	0073T:	He says that he is waiting for - for fish - is it true that the man is waiting for fish? Is it true that he is waiting for fish yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0074S9:	he is waving the two men who are in a canoe boat
GIC GIF LLQ	0075T:	he is - waving - the two men who are in- the canoe we don't have to say canoe boat- what else can you say about the picture Korosso? (he nominates a student)
GIC	0076S2:	I see the road
LLQ RPQ	0077T:	What else can you say - about that picture? What can you say what else can you say?
GIC EV RP(GIC) RP GIC NO	0078S15:	The small house is behind (he stresses the word) the big house. Very good the small house is behind the small house is behind the big house - what can you say yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0079S9:	The houses are near the river



RP(GIC) LLQ	0080T:	The two houses are near the river - what else can you say?
GIC	0081S9:	The two house are near the river
RP(GIC) NO LLQ	0082T:	The two houses are near the river yes Samuel other comments on the picture Onesmo?
GIC	0083S16:	(Onesmo replying) The sun is shining
GIC REP(GIC)	0084T:	The sun is shining the sun is shining - who else?
	0085Sy:	/?/
DIN	0086T:	sit down -speak aloud
GIC	0087Sy:	In the sea there is (.....)
RP(GIC)	0088T:	In the sea there are two (.....)
CPL	0089Sy:	two people in the boat
RP(GIC) EV REX	0090T:	There are two people in the boat yes more comments on the picture /..17../ some more comments on the picture (with a rising intonation)
GIC RP(GIC)	0091S4:	/..10../ The two windows are between the doors isbetween the two windows
GIC RP(GIC)	0092T:	The door is between the two windows (he writes this on the blackboard) - the door is between the two windows - now you have seen that when you said that the two people are paddling the two people are paddling what tense did you use when you say that the two people arepaddling what tense did you use yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC RP (GIC)		
LLQ RP (GIC)		
GIF	0093S4:	the present tense
GIF	0094T:	present continuous tense (he writes this on the blackboard)- when you say that is shining what tense(with a rising intonation)
GIF	0095S4:	present continuous tense
GIF	0096T:	present continuous tense - and when you say the sun was shining what is that
GIF	0097Su:	present continuous tense
RP(W0	0098T:	the sun was shining
GIF	0099St:	past tense
GIF RCF	0100T:	past tense past continuous tense (he writes this on the blackboard) and when you mention the word wave,call, wait,shine, -what type of words are these : wave,wait,shine, even paddling - what parts of speech do these words form yes (with a rising intonation)
NO		

	GIF	0101S2:	present tense
	GIF NO	0102T:	parts of speech /..5../ yes
	GIF	0103Sc:	verbs
	GIF RCF	0104T:	verbs- these words are - now <i>on, in, behind</i> , - what type of words are these?
	GIF	0105Sd:	/..5../ prepositions
	RP(W) FR GIF	0106T:	prepositions preposition - well in the picture you have managed to point out the verbs the prepositions and - you were supposed to discover some more other words -now you have said in the picture but in mentioning what was in the picture you used verbs and these were some phrasal verbs you used - maybe you will use them on another picture which will be presented to you on theboard.
	PR		
3	04	The teacher draws the students' attention to the model presented in the previous lesson as he reviews how a descriptive composition should be written (2.5 mins)	
	05	The teacher hands out writing sheets to each student for writing a composition. Students begin writing the composition (10.5 mins)	
4	06	The teacher collects the written composition (2.5 mins)	
	07	The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)	

ii. **Tape transcript of the Teacher-fronted Descriptive composition, Form 2A, School B.**

1	01	The teacher displays model descriptive composition pictures on the board and asks a few questions about the model (4 mins)
	02	The teacher nominates a student to read to the students after he has handed out a copy of the written model to each (0.2 mins)
2	03	The teacher explains to students about the pictures and removes the model afterwards (5 mins)
3	04	The teacher puts up pictures of the descriptive composition exercise on the board and asks a few questions on them (3 mins)
4	05	Tape transcript (11.5 mins)
	LLQ	0001T: What can you see in the picture?
	GIC	0002S1: I see two mens who are fishes
	RP (GIC) NO	0003T: two men who are fishing yes (with a rising intonation)
	CC GIC	0004S1: who are fishing yes- and one who are standing /..6../ in the coast of the shore lake - and two girls
	RP(W)	0005T: two girls
	GIC	0006S2: one picture there is two house and one tree and /?/
	FR LLQ HLQ NO	0007T: anyway -is it a man or a woman - what are these men doing/ /6/ What do you think these men are doing /..5../ yes (with a rising intonation)
	GIC	0008S3: They are travelling
	RP(GIC) FR LLQ	0009T: They are travelling /..5../ OK can you see these two houses?
	ACK	0010Ss: yes
	HLQ RP(Q)	0011T: What can you tell about these two house? /..15../ ? What can you tell about these two houses and let us let me just put these pictures- anyway can you tell me the differences or similarities between these two houses you see /..10../ mmh (with a rising intonation)
	GIC	0012S4: The big house have got has got one door and two windows and - thatched by grass
	RP(GIC)	013T: by grasses yes
	GIC	0014S4: and the small one - has small window
	GIC	0015T: and

CPL	0016S4:	and /..10../ door
FR EV NO LLQ RAC	0017T:	OK you have tried- someone else? Who can try to explain clearly the difference between the scenery of these two houses as we have seen in the picture? /..12../ and then make sure that if at all you were to write of course everyone should attempt and solve so that make sure that you have something to say about these pictures. Now can you try to tell me the difference or similarities - difference or similarities between these pictures. It is very simple - it is just a matter of looking at the scene /..21../ yes (with a rising intonation)
FR LLQ		
GIC NO		
GIC	0018S4:	One is bigger than the other
RP(GIC) REX NO	0019T:	One is bigger than the other .That's the difference. Is that all? Mhh (with a rising intonation)
RP(W)	0020S5:	the different
RP(W)	0021T:	the difference
GIC	0022S5:	the difference between the two houses is that one is slightly big not small but in the same volume
EV REX	0023T:	yes - is that all - OK it is true that the first one is bigger than the second. This one has two windows and the door at both of these houses there is grass and - the second one - which is smaller than the first of course - I don't know at all - it has got windows or not- of course you cannot see it, is it?
ACK RP(GIC)		
GIC REV		
EV	0024Ss:	it is
EV RP(GIC) HLQ	0025T:	yaah there is a tree there. What do you think is the sort of the tree?
GIC	0026S6:	<i>painat</i>
SP	0027T:	it can be
GIC	0028S7:	<i>painat</i> (with a rising intonation)
RCF	0029T:	eeh? (with a rising intonation)
RP(W)	0030S7:	<i>painat</i> (with a rising intonation)
SP EV RAC RP(RAC) RP(RAC) SP	0031T:	It can be a <i>painat</i> or a mango tree . Good - now let us jump to the - let us jump second one - let us jump to the second one. I think everyone has seen or is able to see it is it?
ACK	0032Ss:	yes
LLQ RAC	0033T:	/..7../ What can you see in this picture? Find - I mean following the example of the first picture /..7../
GIC	0034S8:	In the first picture I see that -the man who carry the fish and the man who /?/ is the son

RCC	0035ST:	is (with a rising intonation)
CC	0036Ss:	a sun
RP(W)	0037T:	the sun
E	0038S8:	the sun /?/ - the sun who is shining -but does not shining directly /..5../
GIC ACK EV REX	0039T:	it is evening time /?/ OK this is how he has tried his level best to explain what you can see- anyone else who can - who can tell me more than that much?
GIC	0040S9:	I see the fisherman who come back from the sea the one them carry the fish- and I see the woman who is (.....)
LLQ	0041T:	who who (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0042S9:	who is cooking some food /.../ and two brothers - one man - and two girls
RP(W) REX REV NO	0043T:	two girls yaah (with a rising intonation )- anyone to te more than that much or do we agree with what he says yes (with a rising intonation) you want to say something
GIC	0044S10:	a mountain
REP(W)	0045T:	a mountain
GIC	0046S10:	a monkey
REX	0047T:	yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0048S10:	two houses in the mountain one is small and /?/ two men one man carrying the fish and the woman is cooking- and the other man was going to the woman who is cooking
RP(GIC)	0049T:	is cooking
E	0050S10:	and there is the river
EV SP GIC REP(GIC) REP(GIC) SP GIC FR	0051T:	very good I think he has tried his level best to explain /..5../ according to what /../ you see about this picture- in fact you you see about this picture /..5../ - in fact you can see - all of us you can see a man carrying a fish- maybe he is coming from the lake /.../ and also there is a man - who seem to be - eh falling or who is cooking- also there is a tree here I don't know if at all it is a mango tree - but it is a tree as you see it - also there is two houses there but anyway (.....)

- 5      06      The teacher explains about how a descriptive composition should be written (3.1 mins)
- 07      The teacher hands out writing sheets to each student to write a composition. Students begin writing compositions. (13.1 mins)

6	08	The teacher collects the written compositions (5 mins)
	09	The teacher dismisses the class (01. mins)

**iii. Tape-transcript of the 'Find the Difference' Descriptive composition, Pair work, Group 2 Form 2A, School A.**

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | 01 | The teacher reviews the previous model composition stressing on how a descriptive composition should be written. He asks a few questions on the model composition pictures. (3 mins)   |
| 2 | 02 | The teacher arranges students in pairs. (5 mins)   |
|   | 03 | The teacher hands out an envelope containing the picture composition sheet to each pair. (4 mins)  |
| 3 | 04 | Tape transcript. (The students start talking but the first part of their discussion does not appear in the transcript apparently because they seem to have forgotten to switch on the audio-tape when the discussion began). (1 min) |
- 
- |                 |          |  |
|-----------------|----------|--|
| FR LLQ          | 0001S1:  | That's OK- another difference?   |
| GIC             | 0002S2:  | In picture number A,there are two people   |
| ACK             | 0003S1:  | Mmh  |
| GIC             | 0004S2:  | one woman - and one man  |
| ACK             | 0005S1:  | OK   |
| GIC             | 0006S2:  | In picture number two there are three people two they are men and [ one is woman ]   |
| RP (W)          | 0006aS1: | [ and one is woman ]   |
| ACK             | 0007S2:  | yes  |
| FR LLQ<br>RP(Q) | 0008S1:  | Alright what you what you -what you think what you thinking about this peoples from number one Picture A two people / ? / they are doing |
| GIC             | 0009S2:  | women /...5../ were do the cooking   |
| GIF             | 0010S1:  | you can say woman is cooking   |
| GIC             | 0011S2:  | woman is cooking   |
| ACK             | 0012S1:  | Mmh  |
| RCC             | 0013S2:  | on on an air   |
| OF              | 0014S1:  | just on air  |
| EV              | 0015S2:  | yes  |
| LLQ             | 0016S1:  | and what about that  |
| GIC             | 0017s2:  | the man is come from to -to river  |
| RPW             | 0018S1:  | to river   |

ACK 0018aS1: [ yes ]

0018bS2: [ and the ]

4 05

The teacher interrupts the discussion as he helps in adjusting the tape recorder. After a few seconds the discussion resumes. (10.4 mins)

0019S2: what can you see in your picture?

GIC RP(W) 0020S1: I see three people /..5../ I see three people one  
GIC RP(GIC) passing she has got two and one person he is  
FR SP walking- he haven't to one people and then there is  
one tree also there is a two houses- one house is  
GIC larger than one and- a-a- a large house there is a two  
windows and one door /..28../ eeh I think /..5../ I  
think not a kind of this tree /..5../ but /..9../ I think  
this person she is cooking some food by using a -  
traditional kitchen

GIC RP W 0021S2: /..6../ in my th is 'picha' I can see one house one -  
tree sunset a woman and woman came and sit /?/  
(inaudible)

EV 0022S1: yes

GIC 0023S2: /..14../ and-and this house /.../ have one /.../ have  
two doors

EV 0024S1: yes

GIC SP RS 0025S2: two windows and one /?/ that's all- this tree I think is  
LLQ a mango tree because the shape of this tree is  
similar to mango tree /..8../ then - a woman I think are  
cooking your - you cooking a food /..34../ what-  
what difference between your picture and my  
picture?

GIC RP(GIC) 0026S1: between the different between my picture and your  
RP(GIC) picture I think in your picture I think in your picture  
RP(GIC) there is two people - and in my picture - there is two  
people which one different -second different - in my  
picturer there is two houses in your picture there is  
one house

EV 0027S2: yes

GIC RP(W) 0028S1: third different is in your picture there is a sunlight  
and in my picture there is no any sunlight also in my  
picture there is one person he is carry he is carrying  
a fish -but in my picture there is no any person who  
is carrying -a fish but there is a -a person who is  
/..7../ who is carrying a tree a piece of tree in his  
/..5../ in his/?/ /..12../ in his hand -then /..8../ I think  
there is no - there is no again a different /..9../ yes  
she was a different between my picture and your  
picture

EV 0029S2: yes



GIC 0030S1: where there is no where there is one different who there is no different whose you see in my picture or your picture

GIC 0031S2: /..27../ the different between my picture and my picture is - in your 'picha' you had two women and in my this picture I have one woman

EV 0032S1: yes

GIC RP(GIC) 0033S2: /.../ one different between your picture and my picture is that the two two second different in my picture there are sunset in your 'picha' there are no sunset /.../ third third third different between - your picture and my picture is /..6../ in my picture there is there is a woman woman who is carrying a fish and - in your picture/.../ there is woman there is a woman /..25../ and teacher say that there are two no difference between your picture these two pictures

SP 0034S2: [ I think ]

ACK 0034aS2: [ yaah yaah ] we can can see three [different]

RP(W) 0035S1: different in this picture

0036S2: / ? / (inaudible)

ROC 0037S1: is what you see a third man?

CC 0038S2: third man I can see

RAC GIC ROC 0039S1: let us discuss the one in my picture there is three people and in your picture and in your picture there is two people isn't it?

CC 0040S2: yes

GIC 0041S1: this one (pointing at the picture) two in my [pictures]

0041aS2: [ second ]

GIC 0042S1: there is

CPL 0042aS2: [ two houses ]

RP(W) GIC 0043S1: two houses and your picture there is one house

EV 0044S2: yes yes

GIC 0045S1: thirdly-in your picture there is one /../

GIF 0046S2: there are sunset

RP(W) GIC 0047S1: there are sunset and in my picture there is no sunset-secondly

ACK 0048S2: OK

GIC 0049S1: four - in my picture there is two -two [ women ]

RP(W) 0049aS2: [ women ]

GIC 0050S1: and in your picture there is one woman and - fourth  
five different is /..5../

GIC RP(W) 0051S2: in your picture there are /..6../ there are one woman  
who cooking some food

EV 0052S1: yes

GIC 0053S2: and in my picture

FR 0054S1: yes

GIC 0055S2: there are one woman

LLQ 0056S1: /..8../ is that the woman she

GIC 0057S2: she is the sitting

RP(GIC) 0058S1: she is the sitting

ACK 0059S2: mmh

SP 0060S1: I think this is the five difference

EV 0061S2: yes

RCC 0062S1: so in your picture (rising intonation)

RP(W) 0063S2: your picture

5 06 The teacher tells students to go back to their respective desks.  
He hands out an envelope containing the picture composition  
exercise to each pair (group).Members of the group begin to  
study the pictures and then discuss about them. The students  
start writing compositions after their discussion. (16 mins)

6 07 The teacher collects the written compositions. (5 mins)

08 The teacher dismisses the class. (0.2 mins)

#### iv. Tape transcript of the Narrative Group-work, Form 2A, School B.

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | 01 | The teacher reviews the previous model narrative composition (The Monkey Story) (5 mins)   |
|   | 02 | The teacher removes the model composition pictures and pins up pictures of the narrative composition task (0.3 mins)                   |
| 2 | 03 | The teacher asks a few questions on the pictures (4 mins)  |
|   | 04 | The teacher arranges students in groups for discussion. He hands out an envelope containing six small envelopes to each group (3 mins) |
| 3 | 05 | Each group member takes an envelope and looks at the picture before the discussion begins (0.5 mins)                                   |
| 4 | 06 | Tape transcript (9.1 mins)   |
- 
- |   |         |  |
|---|---------|--|
| RAC   | 0001S1: | Let's start /..5../  |
| GIC   | 0002S2: | What can you see on the picture?   |
| RP(GIC) LLQ   | 0003S2: | I see a man a box one man- two of them - is climbing /.../ see boxes /../ the man jumped from the bicycle beside the bicycle /..5../ two houses /..8../ and one box - who pushed who pushed the man who who was riding - a bicycle that's all - how do you see in the picture?   |
| GIC   | 0004S3: | In my picture I can see four men and the /../ two among four of those four men-four people there are - two policemen /..6../ one is - a- a boy and a man standing near the boy - holding the bicycle - the bicycle is for the tyre is bent /.../ was bending   |
| RP(W)   |         |  |
| LLQ   | 0005S1: | In that picture what can you see what do you see?  |
| GIC LLQ   | 0006S4: | In my picture I see a car who carry four wooden boxes and back of the car there was a man who was riding a bicycle and also there was - from houses and two men who walking in front of the houses/.../ what can you see in the picture?   |
| GIC   | 0007S5: | In my picture I can see two men one is - one is carrying on his bicycle with a bend tyre poor tyre - and another man - is near near to the car - and I can see also - four boxes one one - is in the car   |
| GIC SP GIC<br>RP(GIC)<br>RP(GIC) GIC<br>SP RP(GIC)<br>GIC | 0008S6: | about my picture I can see -four four man's four mens a a car and inside the car there is a man I think the driver and and I can see a bicycle - which four the four tyres it /.../ a the four / tail/ I think there is a /?/ and I can see the big house - and near the big house there is a policeman who is standing- I think he is taking a the details - and also I can see - the one man who -who has acting but is talking /..12../ and also I can see the boy who standing near the bicycle is listen /..5../ that's all |

GIC RP(GIC) RP(GIC) RP(GIC) FR RP(GIC)	0009Sx:	also in my picture I can see see one house and the man who standing outside the house and the man who was already fell with a big bicycle and the three box boxes who which was fall - fell down and the man who was who who is walking out from the car and the car who is standing and the man -who was in the car is looking behind to the man who is fell - felled with a bicycle /.../ this is about the picture i my picture the thing which I see
EV	0010S6:	Thank you (for about thirty seconds students arrange pictures in order in their groups)
LLQ	0011S1:	What do you see in your first picture?
GIC SP	0012S2:	/..15../ on the first picture I think one day there was a car which was moving in the road - and behind the car - there was a man who was riding a bicycle
ACK LLQ	0013S1:	/..13../ mhh what is the second picture?
GIC RP(GIC) RP(GIC)	0014S2:	/.../ In the second picture the car which was carrying the boxes - the boxes there was already felled on the road and the man who was behind the car - there was already /.../ already- crashed to the boxes and the bicycle is fell with the man
FR GIC	0015S3:	the third picture I can see that when the driver heard the voice he stop the car and got out to the car /../ after that he saw the man who was who riding the bicycle fall down and the box was on the ground
LLQ	0016S1:	What are you thinking for the first picture?
GIC RP(GIC)	0017S3:	for the first picture I see a third man who is carrying on his bicycle and a man from a car from the car - come towards him- and the boxes are on the ground
LLQ	0018S1:	What about the five pictures?
GIC RP(W) RP(GIC)	0019Sy:	At five picture I see the man who was riding a bicycle had already started and carrying his bicycle and the man who - who was driving a car has already reached together already meeting to discuss about /.../ [the accident ]
RP(W)	0019aS4	[ the accident ]
SRP(W) RP(W) GIC	0020Sz:	I see the police - two policemen who was near - a we were were observing the accident which was happened
LLQ	0021S1:	What about the sixth picture?
GIC	0022Sp:	the sixth picture there was a police come to that two men

CPL GIC  
FR

0023Sq: and the driver of the car is talking to the police and  
the accident and the second police is stop stops  
other cars /..../ that's the end of the discussion

- |   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| 5 | 07 | The teacher tells members of the group to go back to their respective desks so that each can write his composition. Students begin writing. (12.9 mins) |
| 6 | 08 | The teacher collects the written compositions (5 mins)  |
|   | 09 | The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)  |

**v. Tape transcript of the Descriptive composition, Pair work ('Find the difference'), Group 1, Form 2A School A.**

- |   |                  |   |
|---|------------------|---|
| 1 | 01               | The teacher reviews the previous lesson based on the model descriptive composition (10 mins)  |
|   | 02               | The teacher removes the pictures of the model composition off the board (0.1 mins)  |
| 2 | 03               | The teacher arranges students in pairs (3 mins)   |
| 3 | 04               | The teacher hands out envelopes containing the exercise to each group (2 mins)  |
|   | 05               | Each member of the group takes out a piece of paper from the envelope (1 min)   |
|   | 06               | The teacher explains to the class about the assignment and later monitors the discussion (2 mins)   |
| 4 | 07               | Tape transcript (4.3 mins)  |
|   | LLQ              | 0001S1: What is on your picture Alexander?  |
|   | GIC              | 0002S2: On my picture I see three people- one of them- /..8../ was cooking his food.  |
|   | GIC              | 0003S1: On my picture I can see three peoples one of them/..5../ a is cooking his food  |
|   | GIC              | 0004S2: In my picture I can see two peoples   |
|   | GIC              | 0005S1: /..10../ also in my picture I can see one tree two houses   |
|   | GIC              | 0006S2: one tree  |
|   | EV               | 0007S1: yes (with a rising intonation)  |
|   | GIC RP(W)<br>LLQ | 0008S2: /..9../ in picture in my picture I can see one tree (he coughs) one house /..5../ what picture you see (with a rising intonation) |
|   | GIC              | 0009S1: /..11../ in my picture I can see the sun  |
|   | GIC              | 0010S2: /..7../ in my picture I can see two houses one of them  |
|   | CPL              | 0011S1: /..7../ is behind (speaking in a low tone)  |
|   | ACK              | 0012S2: Mhh one of them is behind   |
|   | GIC              | 0013S1: In my picture (he coughs) I can see a two house two people one of them is carrying a fish and one of them-is cooking              |

- GIC RP(W)  
GIC 0014S2: In my picture I can see- the houses - one houses have a have two windows /..6../ and one door /..6../ in my picture I can see the door between the windows
- GIC 0015S1: on my picture I can see - a man a woman is cooking without a pot
- GIC 0016S2: /..5../ In my picture I can see- a woman /..5../ she is cooking in his pot
- GIC 0017S1: In my ppicture I can see - a road
- GIC 0018S2: also and me in my picture I can see the road
- LLQ 0019S1: /..8../ What else can you see in your picture?
- GIC 0020S2: In my picture I can see two men - and a woman- one of them is hold a stick and one is walking while a woman is cooking
- GIC 0021S1: /..7../ In my picture there is one house
- GIC 0022S2: In my picture there is two houses
- GIC RP(W)  
GIC 0023S1: /..6../ I can see one man one man who is carrying a fish is walking on the road - in the road
- GIC 0024S2: In my picture I can see- one man
- CPL 0025S1: holding a stick (in a low voice)
- RP(GIC) 0026S2: who was holding a stick
- GIC 0027S1: is walking in the - road
- EV 0028S2: yes
- GIC 0029S1: In my picture I can see a woman /..../ who is cooking in a pot
- GIC 0030S2: In my picture I can see a woman who is cooking without a pot

5 08 The teacher tells members of the group to go back to their respective desks so that each writes a composition of his own (13.4 mins)

6 09 The teacher collects the written composition (5 mins)

10 The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)

**vi. Tape transcript of the 'Find the Difference' Descriptive composition Pair work, Group 2, Form 2B, School A.**

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | 01 | The teacher pins up pictures of the model descriptive composition and reviews the previous lesson on how to write a descriptive composition (5 mins) |
| 2 | 02 | The teacher asks a few questions on the picture for about five minutes (5 mins)  |
|   | 03 | The teacher arranges students in pairs. He then hands out an envelope containing the picture- composition sheets to each group (2.5 mins)            |
| 3 | 04 | Each member of the pair takes out a picture-sheet from the envelope and studies it before the discussion begins                                      |
| 4 | 05 | Tape transcript (4.2 mins)   |
- 
- |  |          |  |
|--|----------|--|
| GIC RP(W)<br>RP(W)<br>GIC<br><br>RP(W)<br>RP(W)<br>RP(W)<br>RP(W)<br>RP(W)<br>FR RP(GIC) | 0001S1:  | In this picture A we can see a woman a woman who is sitting near the - near the fire but in picture B we can see a woman who is sitting near the fire and is cooking some food and in picture B you can see the two houses which appear in that picture but that picture you can see only one house also in picture A you can see a sun which is shining but in picture B - there is no sun which appear in this picture- also in picture A you can see a man- who is come from fishing but in picture in picture B picture B no man who is come from fishing- also in picture B you can see- /../ you can see a boy he is running but in picture A no man no boy who is running- also in picture B there is a - there are- these people but in picture A only one one one only two people who are there- in picture A you can see also a man who is carrying a fish- also /..7../ also if you can see in picture A it appear like in the morning but in picture B you - can't know if- it is- if whether is- is in the morning or not yes in picture B you can see also /.../ eh you can see also a boy who is - going near the fire but in picture A (.....) |
| GIC<br>RP(W)   | 0002S2:  | but no boy who is going near the fire also in picture A it appear that- all of the things which are are there are beyond- the lake - or the river but in picture B - you can't know /.../ what is there- also /..6../ in picture but in picture B there are two houses one is very small - and- the other is [ bigger ] than the other one   |
| RP(W)  | 0002aS1: | [ bigger ]   |
| GIC  | 0003S2:  | in picture A there is a man who is come from fishing but in picture B no man who is come from [ fishing ]  |
| RP(W)  | 0003aS1  | [ fishing ]  |
| GIC  | 0004S2:  | also in picture A you can see a sun which is raising above the (said with a rising intonation) [ hill ]  |



		RP(W)	0004aS1: [ the hill ]
		SP RAC	0005S1: I think we have finished our discussion. <i>Sijui tuzime</i> (Kiswahili for 'Should we switch off?')
		DIN	0006S1: <i>Tuzime</i> (let us switch off)
5	06		The teacher tells students to go back to their respective desks and hands out writing sheests to each, and students begin writing (17.8 mins)
6	07		The teacher collects the written compositions (2.5 mins)
	08		The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)

**vii. Tape transcript of the 'Find the difference' Descriptive composition, Pair work, Group 3, Form 2A, School A.**

1	01	The teacher reminds students about the model descriptive pictures which he has pinned up on the board emphasizing how a descriptive composition should be written. (5 mins)	
	02	The teacher removes the pictures and arranges students in pairs. (2 mins)	
	03	The teacher hands out an envelope containing the two composition pictures to each pair. (3 mins)	
2	04	Tape transcript (3.2 mins)	
	RAC GIC	0001S1:	Let us first describes the differences which are- in- these two pictures /../ in my picture there is a fish
	GIC	0002S2:	In my picture there is /..8../ no fish
	GIC	0003S1:	In my picture there is two houses
	GIC	0004S2:	In my picture there is no /../ two houses
	GIC	0005S1:	In my picture - there is no a traditional chair
	GIC	0006S2:	In my picture there is a traditional chair
	GIC	0007S1:	In my picture there is a tree
	GIC	0008S2:	In my picture also there is a tree
	GIC	0009S1:	In my picture there is no a sun
	GIC	0010S2:	In my picture there is a sunrise
	GIC	0011S1:	In my picture I can see- three peoples
	FR GIC	0012S2:	or in my picture I can see two people
	FR GIC	0013S1:	Mhh in my picture I can see a man holding a stick
	GIC	0014S2:	In my picture I can see a man holding a stick- on top of it there is a fish
	GIC	0015S1:	In my picture there is a young man running towards the woman
	GIC	0016S2:	In my picture there is no young man but there is a- woman who is sitting on - on a traditional seat and/..../ he doesn't do anything
	GIC	0017S1:	In my picture there is the pot on a fire
	GIC	0018S2:	but in my picture there is no a pot on the fire

	FR GIC FR RAC FR GIC	0019S1:	oh now we have already found the five differences - now let us try to tell the story OK /...5../ a short story I can say that once upon a time there is - a certain - boys who were going to fish - and they - left the house at the morning
	EV	0020S2:	yes
	GIC RP(GIC) GIC	0021S1:	they go there they fish and at the evening they come back when they are coming back the youngest man was towards the old man and he was run towards the woman who was cooking the food - and an old man - was holding a stick and at the end of that stick there is a fish - that's what I can say about that picture - what can you say about that picture?
	FR GIC		
	GIC	0022S2:	There is no difference - at that at this picture
	SP GIC	0023S1:	I think that's only the story you can say about these pictures
	GIC	0024S2:	there is the same
3	05		The teacher tells the students to go back to their respective desks. (1.5 mins)
	06		The teacher hands out writing sheets to each student. Students start writing. (20.6 mins)
4	07		The teacher collects the written compositions. (4.5 mins)
	08		The teacher dismisses the class. (0.2 mins)

**viii Tape-transcript of the 'Find the Difference', Descriptive composition, Pair work, Group 1, Form 2B, School A.**

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | 01 | The teacher reviews the previous model composition pictures with the students emphasizing the modalities of writing a good descriptive composition. (5 mins) |
|   | 02 | The teacher removes the model composition pictures and arranges students in pairs. (3 mins)  |
|   | 03 | The teacher hands out to each pair an envelope containing picture composition task sheets. (2 mins)  |
| 2 | 04 | Students in each pair carefully study the pictures before the discussion begins. (0.5 mins)  |
| 3 | 05 | Tape transcript (6.7 mins)   |
- 
- |                  |          |   |
|------------------|----------|---|
| FR RAC LLQ<br>CC | 0001S1:  | Aah you know - we are going to discuss about the pictures - but first of all let me ask the following questions - now can you tell me the difference between the two groups /.../ between these two pictures? |
| ACK              | 0002S2:  | yes   |
| DIV              | 003S1:   | Tell me please mmh (with a rising intonation)   |
| GIC              | 004S2:   | The difference on picture - number A I have a sun and picture B (.....) [no sun]  |
| GIC FR LLQ       | 0004aS1: | [there is no sun] - so you mean that in picture number A there is a sun but on picture number B there is no sun   |
| EV               | 0005S2:  | yes   |
| ACK              | 0006S1:  | OK that's OK eeh (with a rising intonation) - another difference?   |
| GIC              | 0007S2:  | In picture number A there are two people  |
| ROC              | 0008S1:  | mmh   |
| CC               | 0009S2:  | one woman and one man   |
| ROC ACK          | 0010S1:  | mmh eeh OK [OK]   |
| LLQ              | 0011AS2: | [picture number A]  |
| GIC              | 0012S1:  | In picture number B there are three people, two were men [and]  |
| CPL              | 0012aS2: | [and one is a woman]  |
| RP(W) FR         | 0013S1:  | one - alright now what you what you what we (.....) You think thinking about meeting peoples from picture A /..5../ first the difference between two  |

	0014S2:	/?/
GIC	0015S1:	the woman is - is do the cooking
GIC	0016S2:	you can say the woman is cooking
RP(GIC)	0017S1:	the woman is cooking and (.....)
CPL	0018S2:	(.....) on a air
RP(GIC)	0019S1:	just on the air
EV	0020S2:	yes
LLQ	0021S1:	and what about the /?/
GIC	0022S2:	the man is come from to river
GIC	0023S1:	and you can see the chair with one cushion
EV	0024S2:	yes
LLQ	0025S1:	and what are you thinking about picture number B about that people
GIC	0026S2:	the woman is cooking
EV	0027S1:	yes
GIC	0028S2:	and the man to run towards [the]
CPL	0028aS1:	[towards the woman]
GIC	0029S2:	and one to - to have one one stick
FR ACK RAC DIN	0030S1:	actually one thinking OK let's continue our new /?/ (utters a word which sounds like 'reception') and you can tell me another difference between two pictures? (with a rising intonation)
ACK	0031S2:	yes
DIV	0032S1:	tell me please
GIC	0033S2:	distance picture A there are one house - in picture number B there are two houses
RP (GIC)	0034S1:	there are two houses
EV	0035S2:	yes
EVNO	0036S1:	OK - and another (with a rising intonation) continue the description please
DIN GIC	0037S2:	don't speak more no it is I don't understand

REX ACK REV 0038S1: you can't you can't mention more OK (with a rising intonation) let me help you - here you can mention five differences between the two pictures /..5../ you can see them yourself that picture number A there is one house but in picture number B there are two houses - that is the first difference. In picture number A there are two people - one is a woman and one is a man but in picture B there are three people two is there are men, that is the second difference. The third difference is that the woman on picture A is cooking on air but when you see on your picture number B you will see that the woman is cooking some food and the what is the third difference - another difference is that the man on picture A come with a stick [with]

CPL 0038aS2: [with a fish]

GIC 0039S1: but when you see on picture number B you will see that there is two men

ACK 0040S2: mmh

GIC LLQ 0041S1: one man is walking to the woman who came here and one man came with a stick without a fish - another difference is that (.....) the last difference is /?! - can you tell me?

LLQ 0042S2: Number? (with a rising intonation)

RCC 0043S1: Is that point enough?

ACK 0044S2: yes

ACK HLQ RP(Q) 0045S1: ok now let me question you - my question is that what do you what do you think about people or a man in picture A number in picture A what you think about? (with a rising intonation)

EV 0046S2: No, I don't know

FR HLQ 0047S1: let me ask you another question a eeh the a man on picture A he come from where you think? (with a rising intonation)

GIC 0048S2: come from the river

HLQ 0049S1: river - to do what you think (with a rising intonation)

GIC 0050S2: to do fish

FR RS 0051S1: eeh because you can see yourself a cane with a fish and

EV 0052S2: yes

HLQ 0053S1: and how about a man in picture number B

ACK 0054S2: ves this is

GIC	0055S1:	he is /../ the the one man to run to woman
EV	0056S2:	yes
RP(W) RIC	0057S1:	and one
GIC	0058S2:	and to woman one man to come from to the river
CPL	0059S1:	and carrying one fish
EV	0060S2:	yes
HLQ	0061S1:	but how can you can know that he come from to the river?
LLQ	0062S2:	which river?
HLQ GIV RAC LLQ	0063S1:	how to know which men is come from - to the river because here you can see the can only without without /..5../ without a fish OK let's continue and what do you think about a woman on picture number A - what she is doing (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0064S2:	I am cooking I can only (.....)
GIC	0065S1:	you can't say - I am - you can say she is (.....)
CPL	0066S2:	she is (.....) I try to cooking only
REV	0067S1:	let me try to correct your sentence - you can say she is cooking on the air
GIC	0068S2:	she is cooking on the air
FR LLQ	0069S1:	Hey - and what about woman on picture B?
GIC	0070S2:	A woman is cooking
FR GIC	0071S1:	Mmh is cooking some food
EV RP(W)	0072S2:	yes some food
FR LLQ	0073S1:	all right after you can - can you have a question to question me?
GIC	0074S2:	in the question there are (.....)
CPL	0075S1:	there is no question
ACK	0076S2:	eeh
FR	0077S1:	so
GIC	0078S2:	you can
CPL	0079S1:	you can [number]

		RP (W) GIC	0079aS2:	[number] number here but you will continue to teach me
		ACK GIC	0080S1:	OK I will listen
		GIC	0081S2:	is not to do this [subject]
		CPL	0081aS1:	[subject]
		GIC	0082S1:	in order to improve your English
		EV	0083S2:	yes
		FR GIC	0084S1:	now OK you can
		ACK	0085S2:	OK
		RAC	0086S1:	you can continue to (.....)
4	06			The teacher tells each member of the pair to go back to his respective desk (1.5 mins)
	07			The teacher hands out writing sheets and students begin writing (17.8 mins)
5	08			The teacher collects the written compositions (4 mins)
	09			The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)



ix	<b>Tape-transcript of the 'Find the Difference', Descriptive composition, Pair work, Group 1, Form 2B, School B.</b>	
1	01	The teacher puts up pictures of the model descriptive composition and reviews the previous composition
	02	The teacher asks students a few questions before distributing to them envelopes containing the exercise
2	03	The teacher arranges students in pairs.
	04	The teacher hands out to each pair an envelope containing the exercise. Each student takes out a sheet of paper on which are pictures of the exercise and studies it carefully before the discussion begins.
3	05	Tape transcript
	LLQ	0001S1: What can you see in your picture?
	GIC LLQ	0002S2: In my picture I can see a tree-a house -also I can see a tree-what about you?
	GIC LLQ	0003S1: I can see one houses and a tree /.../ what about you?
	GIC EXP LLQ	0004S2: eeh in my picture I can see the tree passes - and I can also see the hills that is different to my picture-my picture show that there are two pictures-one was cooking and one was carrying the the stick a the behind have a fish. What can you see there in your picture?
	GIC	0005S1: eeh in my picture I see one road comes from the house
	GIC	0006S2: and that I see two people and that is the same /..5../ also at my picture I can see the red grass through at the house
	LLQ	0007S1: from where?
	GIC LLQ	0008S2: from the river/.../ what about the sun in your picture?
	GIC	0009S1: eh in my picture I cannot see the sun
	HLQ	0010S2: yes-you think that is the morning or the evening (with a rising intonation)
	SP	0011S1: yes we think is morning
	SP RS	0012S2: It can be true because I can see the dark in the house. What about /.../ what about the - around the house?
	GIC RPGIC	0013S1: eeh around the house I can see the grass also in my picture behind there is one house

GIC LLQ	0014S2:	it differ from me in my picure. I can see one house only and around that house there there is grass planted around the house-what about the hill?
GIC RP(W)	0015S1:	/..5../ the hill eh it is hill two hills behind the houses
LLQ	0016S2:	Can you see the river?
ACK	0017S1:	yes
GIC	0018S2:	its that for all (inaudible)
LLQ	0019S1:	what about the /..5../ can you see that woman who cook?
ACK	0020S2:	yes
GIC	0021S1:	you can see
CPL	0022S2:	the woman who is cooking and also I can see the one house who /?/
LLQ	0023S1:	what does the house cover? (with a rising intonation)
RP(Q)	0024S2:	which?
	0025S1:	that house (what follows is inaudible due to the intervening voice of the teacher who is explaining something to other groups)
LLQ	0026S2:	What can you see also?
FCC	0027S1:	I can see /?/

- x. Tape transcript of the "Find the Difference" Descriptive composition, Pair work, Group 3, Form 2B, School A.**
- |   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| 1 | 01 | The teacher puts up pictures of the model narrative composition and reviews the previous lesson (1.5 mins)        |
|   | 02 | The teacher puts up pictures of the descriptive composition exercises and asks a few questions (2 mins)           |
| 2 | 03 | The teacher arranges students in pairs (1 min)  |
|   | 04 | The teacher distributes envelopes containing the picture-composition. He gives one envelope to each pair (3 mins) |
| 3 | 05 | Students in each pair study the pictures carefully before the discussion begins (0.5 mins)                        |
| 4 | 06 | Tape transcript (13.1 mins)   |
- 
- |            |          |  |
|------------|----------|--|
| GIC        | 0001S1:  | in picture B you can say that in picture A and in picture A - there is two people two people |
| EV GIC     | 0002S2:  | yes and in picture B I will see if there are three people                                    |
| RCC        | 0003S1:  | if there is  |
| EV         | 0004S2:  | yes  |
| GIC        | 0005S1:  | the second difference is /..6../   |
| ACK        | 0006S1:  | yes  |
| GIC        | 0007S2:  | in picture B I will see two house  |
| EV RP(GIC) | 0008S1:  | yes [ picture B I will see two house ]   |
| GIC        | 0008aS2: | [ picture B there are two houses ]   |
| GIC        | 0009S1:  | one house  |
| EV         | 0010S2:  | yes  |
| GIC        | 0011S1:  | picture B I will see one tree  |
| RP(W)      | 0012S2:  | [ picture ]  |
| RP(GIC)    | 0012aS1: | [ picture b ] I will see one tree  |
| RP(W)      | 0013S2:  | picture B  |
| RP(W)      | 0014S1:  | [ one tree ] and picture A I will see  |
| CPL        | 0014aS2: | [ one tree ]   |
| RCC        | 0015S1:  | eeh picture A one tree and (in a high -pitched voice)  |
| EV         | 0016S2:  | yes  |

RP(RCC)	0017S1:	what (in a high-pitched voice)
CC	0018S2:	one tree
EV GIC	0019S1:	not a difference this is not a difference - this is something which is not the same or (.....)
ACK	0020S2:	yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0021S1:	number three [ is showing that ]
GIC	0021aS2	[ picture B I see ]
RP(W) GIC	0022S1:	picture B in picture A the sun /.../ they will- there will be the sun which which rises (in a muffled voice)
RP(W)	0023S2:	which rises
EV RP(W)	0024S1:	yes which rises
	0025S2:	and
CPL	0026S1:	picture B I will not (.....)
GIC	0027S2:	there is not there isn't
CPL	0028S2:	sun
EV RCC	0029S1:	yes difference number four - difference number four the man
CPL	0030S2:	the man
RP(W)	0031S1:	first man
RP(W)	0032S2:	first man
GIC	0033S1:	in - in this picture - is carry /..5../ the stick
CPL	0034S2:	and fish
GIC	0035S1:	[ which ] and this picture B the
CPL	0035aS2:	[ takes ] stick
RP(W) GIC	0036S1:	takes sticks only without fish on his shoulder
EV	0037S2:	yes
RCC	0038S1:	on his shoulder
CC	0039S2:	on his shoulder
REV	0040S1:	is that clear?
EV	0041S2:	yes
SP FR	0042S1:	that difference - I think the difference is that ehh (whispers something to S1)

ACK	0043S2:	mmh
RP(GIC)	0044S1:	the five the last the five and last the woman /..5../ in in [ this picture ] this picture
CPL	0044aS2:	[ picture B ]
GIC	0045S1:	is cooking- some - food - in- the pot, picture B
RP(W)	0046S2:	in the pot
RP(W)	0047S1:	picture B (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0048S2:	without - the pot in picture B (.....)
RP(W)	0049S1:	picture A (.....)
RP(GIC)	0050S2:	the woman - this is picture B you see
EV	0051S1:	yes
ACK	0052S2:	oh yes in picture B picture B yes
GIC	0053S1:	picture B a woman is cooking
RP(GIC)	0054S2:	cooking the food
RP(W) E	0055S1:	food [ without ] - without a pot
RP(W)	0055aS2:	[ with out ]
CF	0056S1:	in this picture some food /?/ with in the (stresses the last word) I think - it is better to use this will in the pot
EV	0057S2:	yes
GIC	0058S1:	so this is the five difference between picture A- the picture B
EV	0059S2:	yes
RCC	0060S1:	so /.../ there is no any difference in this picture
EV	0061S2:	yes
GIC	0062S1:	and the instruction is saying that write
CPL	0063S2:	five differences
FR RAC	0064S1:	so I think we must write clearly -these these five difference differences picture A and picture B
RP(W)	0065S2:	picture B
EV	0066S1:	yes picture A
RP(GIC)	0067S2:	yes picture A
GIC	0068S1:	picture A there are two people

RP(GIC)	0069S2:	there are two people
GIC	0070S1:	picture A there are two people (he counts in a soft voice)
GIC	0071S2:	picture B [ there are ] three people
GIC FR GIC	0071aS1:	[ picture B there are ] two people three - oh this is the first difference second (he writes down the differences as he is talking) in picture A (.....)
FR GIC	0072S2:	yes one I see one house
FR GIC GIC	0073S1:	yes picture A (he carefully studies the picture) /..10../ there is one house (he continues writing as he talks) picture B
GIC	0074S2:	[ two house ]
RP(W) GIC RP(W)	0074aS1:	[ there are ] two houses- this is and th second - two houses (he reads out what has been written and consults his friend) third difference it is (.....)
GIC	0075S2:	picture A I see a sun
RP (GIC)	0076S1:	[ a sun ] there will be a sun
RP(W) E	0076aS2:	[ the sun yes ]
RCC	0077S1:	which dies /?/
EV	0078S2:	yes
GIC	0079S1:	in picture A /.../ is eeh (with a high pitched voice) yes can see
GIC	0080S2:	the sun which /?/ no is rise mean (reads out what he has written down in a muffled voice)
GIC	0081S1:	[ picture B ] I cannot see
GIC RP(W) RP(W) APL RP(GIC)	0081aS2:	[ picture B ] there is no there is no sun (reading out what he is writing) first man first man - the first man - sorry first man in this picture A (speaking as he writes)
EV	0082S1:	yes
GIC	0083S2:	carry the stick
CPL	0084S1:	fish
GIC	0085S2:	is picture A carry the [ stick ]
RP(GIC)	0085aS1:	[ fish ] he picture A carry
RP(GIC)	0086S2:	carry stick
RP(W)	0087S1:	carry (emphasizes the word as it is being written

	RP(W)	0088S2:	[ stick ]
	RP(GIC)	0088aS1:	[ carry fish ]
	RP(GIC)	0089S2:	carry fish and fish which which [ hanging ] which is hanging
	RP(GIC)	0089aS1:	[ yes ] /..10../ which hanging on the stick on the stick this word on
	EV	0090S2:	yes
	SP GIC REP(GIC)	0091S1:	/??/ it appear ther differences was this picture A the man took the stick with a fish on his shoulder take- take- I think takes - without - on his shoulder -without fish so the five differences and the last I think - for this woman a woman in the picture are A a woman in /..14../ a woman in picture A is working some food (said hurriedly as he reads out the sentence he has just written out) is the pot
	RCC	0092S2:	eeh
	EV	0093S1:	yes <i>hapana</i> (Swahili for 'not at all') in the picture A (.....)
	GIC	0094S2:	I don't know
	EV	0095S1:	yes [ without ]
	RP(W)	0095aS2:	[ without ]
	FR EV RP (GIC)	0096S1:	eeh yes a woman in picture A is cooking some food without a pot (sounds to be writing and reading at the same time)
	LLQ	0097S2:	[ and B ] a man
	GIC	0097aS1:	[ and in B ] a woman is cooking some food also in the pot (both S1 and S2 read out the words which S1 is writing)
4	07	The teacher hands out writing sheets to each student after telling them to go to their respective desks (4 mins + 20 mins written work)	
5	08	The teacher collects the written compositions (5 mins)	
	09	The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)	

**xi. Tape transcript of the 'Find the Difference' Descriptive composition, Pair-work, Form 2A School B.**

- |   |                      |  |
|---|----------------------|--|
| 1 | 01                   | The teacher reviews the previous lesson after putting up the big descriptive pictures on the blackboard (5 mins)   |
|   | 02                   | The teacher removes the pictures and arranges students in pairs for discussion(4 mins)   |
| 2 | 03                   | The teacher hands out the envelope containing the picture exercises to each pair and explains about instructions on the envelope (3 mins)  |
|   | 04                   | Students open the envelope and a member of each pair takes out his picture before the discussion begins (3 mins)   |
| 3 | 05                   | Tape transcript (5.1 mins)   |
|   | LLQ                  | 0001S1: What can you see in the picture?   |
|   | GIC RP(W)<br>GIC LLQ | 0002S2: In my picture I can see one house -one house - in my picture I can see again one tree one tree the sun- two people- and a two people- the woman who is cooking and the man who was carrying the the fishes /.../ and you what can you see in your picture? |
|   | GIC                  | 0003S1: In my picture I can see two houses one is bigger than another and is two windows and one door but the smaller is not that and also I can see trees three peoples one is walking on the road another man is walking towards the woman who is cooking        |
|   | LLQ RP(Q)<br>HLQ     | 0004S2: What did what can you -think about - the house - there was made with with grass or (....)  |
|   | SP GIC<br>RP(W)      | 0005S1: I think this houses are made - it is a -the same modernbut it covered by or it covered by- by grasses  |
|   | GIC                  | 0006S2: It is on the mountain - or under the mountain  |
|   | SP RAC               | 0007S1: I think it is under the mountain /..8./ so let us /diferentiet/ them   |
|   | GIC                  | 0008S2: true pictures /..7../ in picture A there is the sun  |
|   | GIC                  | 0009S1: on picture B there was no sun  |
|   | GIC                  | 0010S2: in picture A they have one house   |
|   | GIC                  | 0011S1: on the picture B they are two houses   |
|   | GIC RP(W)<br>GIC     | 0012S2: in picture B picture A there is the man who was carrying the fish  |
|   | GIC                  | 0013S1: but in picture B there was a man who don't carrying the fish   |



GIC RP(W)	0014S2:	in the picture A picture A there is /.../ there is the two man the two people
GIC	0015S1:	on picture B there are three peoples - and also in picture B there are a pots
GIC	0016S2:	in picture A there is no a pot
RAC GIC	0017S1:	so let us to tell the short story about that pictures- one day there was a man who going to fishing the fish so he went early the morning to go the lake- when he arrived at the lake- he started to fishing but at that day he didn't get any fish so he decided to come back home- when he arrived at home he meet his wife cooking so the next day he went also early the morning
RP(GIC) GIC RP(W) EV	0018S2:	when he went early in the morning - in this day - he get the fish - in the evening and he come he he start to - to go at home- he reach and he see the wi his wife which was sit near the fire- but - it is not making - the food- and this picture /.../ there was - there was a one houses and this man is living near the lake Thank (.....)

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 4 | 06 | The teacher tells students to go back to their desks so that each can write his composition on his own. Students begin writing (17.7 mins) |
| 5 | 07 | The teacher collects the written compositions (4 mins)   |
|   | 08 | The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)   |

**xii Transcript of the 'Find the difference' Descriptive composition, Pair work, Group 2, Form 2A, School B.**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | 01                                       | The teacher puts up the previous model composition pictures and reviews the previous lesson (7.1 mins)   |
|   | 02                                       | The teacher takes the pictures off the blackboard (0.5 mins)   |
| 2 | 03                                       | The teacher arranges students in pairs. Students move to their respective groups (3 mins)  |
| 3 | 04                                       | The teacher hands out an envelope containing pictures of the exercise and gives the envelope to each group (2.5 mins)  |
|   | 05                                       | Each member of the group takes out a piece of paper from the envelope and looks at it carefully before the discussion begins (0.5 mins)  |
|   | 06                                       | The teacher explains to the class about the assignment and later monitors the discussion (3 mins)  |
| 4 | 07                                       | Tape transcript (5.4 mins)   |
|   | FR LLQ                                   | 0001S1: (laughs, apparently out of sheer excitement as he points at his fellow student in the group) Hullo my friend - who is see there in the picture?  |
|   | FR RAC<br>RP (RAC)<br>RP(GIC)<br>RP(GIC) | 0002S2: /..6../Thanks Mr. Samuel or- let us tell let us to tell what I can see in - in the picture one I can see - a man - who - carry - a fish- and I can see the picture of the sun one woman who sit near the fire - and there are - a big tree behind the house - also there are one house /..12../ I think this is the end of pictures which I have seen in the in that paper so you can tell which picture you see in your- paper  |
|   | EV GIC<br>RP(W)                          | 0003S1: Thanks. In your picture A I can see the sun is shine - and I can see - a man come back to the home from the sea (pronounced as written) - who hold a fish and I can - I can see the big tree behind the house - and also I can see the man - who is sitting near the fire - and also I can see - the big house   |
|   | FR GIC FR<br>GIC                         | 0004S2: Oh Mr. Samuel let me to give you some differences between these pictures oh in the the picture A there are somebody who carry a big fish but in picture this picture B this man- he he didn't carry any fish but he carry wood /.../ and I can see that in this picture A there are sun which is shining but in this picture picture B there are no - there are no any - picture of sun- .And there are another difference which is in the picture A there are no- man who -is running but in this picture B there are somebody who is running away /.../ and in the picture A -there are a one house - while in picture B there are two houses which one is big and another is small - mister I think this is the difference between these pictures |
|   | RP(GIC)                                  |  |
|   | FR SP                                    |  |
|   | EV RAC                                   | 0005S1: Thanks my friend - give me the short story of these two pictures   |

FR GIC  
 RP(W)  
 RP(W) RP(W)  
 RP(W)  
 SP

0006S2: Thanks Mr. Hungwi let me to give stories about these pictures I can say that one day there are a man - whom his his work is fisherman - he he wake up early morning - and go and go to the river when he he when he reached the river he started to fishing but that day he didn't get any fish /../ and he decided and he decide to go to their home - at another day he went and he succeeded to get - one fish which is big. I think this is short story Mr. Hungwi.

EV

007S1: Thanks my friends

- |   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| 5 | 08 | The teacher tells the students to go back to their desks so that each can write his own composition (12.8 mins) |
| 6 | 09 | The teacher collects the written composition (5 mins)   |
|   | 10 | The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)  |

**xiii. Tape transcript of the 'Find the Difference' descriptive composition, Pair work, Group 3, Form 2A, School B.**

1	01	The teacher reviews the previous model descriptive composition emphasizing how a descriptive composition should be written. (5 mins)
	02	The teacher removes pictures of the model composition and arranges students in pairs for discussion (4 mins)
	03	The teacher distributes envelopes containing the composition picture exercises to pair groups. (4 mins)
2	04	Students study pictures carefully before the discussion begins (2 mins)
3	05	Tape transcript (2.7 mins)
	NO	0001S1: Mr Bathazar
	ACK	0002S2: yes (in a rising intonation)
	LLQ	0003S1: What can you see in your picture?
	GIC	0004S2: oh in my picture
	ACK	0005S1: eh
	GIC	0006S2: I see one tree
	EV	0007S1: eeh
	GIC	0008S2: and and two houses
	EV	0009S1: yes
	GIC	0010S2: then I see two boys who are walking
	EV	0011S1: mmh
	GIC	0012S2: then I see a woman who are cooking in a pot
	EV	0013S1: yes
	GIC	0014S2: then - I see the road I don't know where is come from but it it going in the house
	EV	0015S1: yaah
	FR GIC	0016S2: yaah and then I see many grasses
	EV	0017S1: eeh
	GIC	0018S2: then I see two roads are - going - it is [going]
	RP (W)	0018aS1: [two roads]

RP(W) EV 0019S2: two ro two [roads] two  
 0019aS1: [roads yes]

RP(W) 0020S1: roads

GIC 0021S2: it is going in many difference .....

EV 0022S1: yes

GIC 0023S2: are things I see in my picture

ACK 0024S1: OK

NO LLQ 0025S2: So Amos [what]

FR 0025aS1: [now]

GIC 0026S1: do you see in your picture?

GIC 0027S1: (coughs)/.../ in my picture I can see eh somebody  
 who I think come from the lake

EV 0028S2: yes

CPL 0029S1: who is carrying a fish someone who is carrying a fish

EV 0030S2: yes

GIC 0031S1: I can see a way from the lake to the house /../ that is I  
 can see a house

FR GIC 0032S2: /.../ eh then I can see a woman

EV 0033S1: yes

CPL 0034S2: who is cooking - who is using a pot he is cooking

RP (GIC) LLQ 0035S1: is cooking some food or?

GIC 0036S2: is cooking something

EV 0037S1: ah yes

GIC 0038S2: I can see the sun who is I think it is shining

EV 0039S1: yes

GIC RP(GIC)  
 RP(GIC) 0040S2: I can see one tree /.../ I can see grass through  
 surrounding the house the I can see two more men

EV 0041S1: ah yes

RP(W) GIC 0042S2: that is that is the thing I can see in my picture

ACK NO 0043S1: OK now Mr Amos

ACK 0043S1: yes

GIC RP(GIC)	0048S2:	our two pictures I can see - we can see of course two differences
CPL	0049S1:	two
EV	0050S2:	yaah
EV	0051S1:	/?/ not two, five differences
ACK	0052S2:	ah five five yes
GIC	0053S1:	one different is the sun
ACK	0054S2:	oh
GIC	0055S1:	in my picture there is a sun there is the sun
EV	0056S2:	yes
GIC	0057S1:	but in your picture there is no sun
EV	0058S2:	ah yes
GIC RP(GIC)	0059S1:	the secondary is - eh in my picture there are there is one boy there is one man
RP(W)	0060S2:	man (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0061S1:	but in your picture there are two men
ACK EV	0062S2:	ah yes yes
FR GIC RP GIC	0063S1	eh thirdly in my - picture - there are in my picture there is a man who carry fish
EV	0064S2:	yes
GIC	0065S1:	but in your picture - there is a man who who is not carrying fish
EV	0066S2:	yes yes
RP(EV)	0067S1:	yaah fourthly in my picture there are there is woman who who appear who appears a as a as a woman who cooking but there is no pot
EV	0068S2:	ah yes
GIC	0069S1:	there is no cooking pot but in your picture there is cooking pot
EV RP (EV)	0070S2:	yes yes
GIC	0071S1:	in my picture there is one house
ACK	0072S2:	ah yes
GIC	0073S1:	but in your picture there is two houses that is the different

ACK EV 0074S2: OK thank you

GIC 0075S1: the differences in our pictures

EV 0076S2: thank you your [picture]

0076aS1: [yaah]

GIC 0077S2: with your difference

GIC 0078S1: in our pictures

EV RP(W) 0079S2: yes yes

ACK EV 0080S1: OK OK thank you Sir Erasmo

EV 0081S2: thank you Mr Amos

ACK 0082S1: OK

- 4 06 The teacher tells members of the pair to go back to their respective desks and distributes the writing sheets. Students begin writing. (17 mins)
- 5 07 The teacher collects the written compositions (5 mins)
- 08 The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)

**xiv. Tape transcript of the 'Find the Difference' descriptive composition, Pair work, Group 2, Form 2B School B.**

1	01	The teacher quickly reviews the model descriptive composition emphasising how a descriptive composition should be written. (2 mins)
	02	The teacher removes pictures of the descriptive model compositions and arranges students in pairs. (0.5 mins)
2	03	The teacher hands out envelopes containing the writing task (pictures), giving each pair an envelope. (5 mins)
	04	Each member of the pair carefully studies the picture he is given before the discussion begins. (5 mins)
3	05	Tape transcript (10.7 mins)
	FR	0001S1: Right - so you can (.....)
	NO LLQ	0002S2: Now Mr Fred what can you see on your picture?
	GIC SP	0003S1: On my picture I can see two houses and then I can see a man - I think - he is holding he is holding a stick and nearby I can see a woman - cooking some food near near her there is a man going towards her and near those two houses I can see a tree /.../ but - I don't know - those things which kinds of fruits it is - I think the fruits these two two houses are different one is better than the other it has two windows one door is missing but the other hasn't even one one window and near the sea there is a river but you also add on my picture what can you see on your pictures also?
	GIC	
	SP	
	GIC	
	LLQ	
	RP GIC	0004S2: Oh in my picture first of all we have written all big lines on my picture we have been told which are seen on your picture
	RCC	0005S1: My picture?
	CC	0006S2: aah
	GIC	0007S1: On my picture I can see a sun, a tree - and a house. It is one house with - one wi(...) one door and two windows. It is somehow big that house apart from that I can see a - a man carrying a fish I think he is a fisherman he has a - come from fishing and apart from that I can see a woman - sitting - on something I don't know what but maybe a traditional chair doing something but it is not sh.... it is not shown clearly what she is doing but maybe if this picture would be completed she is looking like as is she is cooking eh /.../ near the house and - in conclusion I can say /..5../ that it is evening because the sun - is setting what I can see on my picture /..5../ so now let us compare two pictures eeh
	SP	
	GIC	
	SP	
	GIC	
	GIC	
	GIC RAC	
	ACK	0008S2: OK



RP(RAC) 0009S1: Let us compare two pictures in on your eh the sun is  
GIC not shine eh, the sun is not shine eh

RP(GIC) 0010S2: the sun is not shining

0011S1: [and]

GIC 0011aS2: [also] this man is carrying a stick instead of fish

RCF 0012S1: is just carrying a stick instead of [a fish] eeh? (with a  
rising intonation)

GIC 0012aS2: [a fish] and there is another man running towards  
this woman

SP 0013S1: and I think his their son

EV 0014S2: perhaps

RP(EV) 0015S1: perhaps

EV 0016S1: mmh

GIC 0017S1: on my picture that boy shown on your picture is  
missing on my picture - and on my picture - is shown  
LLQ that there are is only one houses house thereby on  
your picture shown two houses /..10../ so just how  
many differences - a sun

RP 0018S2: a sun

GIC 0019S1: a woman no a woman cooking on my picture is  
shown that a woman is just sitting in on my picture it  
is shown that - a woman is cooking some food eeh?

EV 0020S2: yes

RAC 0021S1: so let us conclude how about two pictures shown -  
we can make a summary by saying that - it is in the  
GIC evening /..5../ in a certain village somewhere we  
don't know where

EV 0022S2: yes

GIC 0023S1: a woman is cooking some food and a man is carrying  
[carrying]

RP(GIC) 0023aS2: [carrying]

0024S1: carrying fish with we can say that he is coming from  
fishing aah and that boy on the picture - I don't know  
their son.

SP 0025S2: I think he is coming from playing

EV 0026S1: yeah

CPL 0027S2: with his fellows now in the evening he has come for  
000001: ...

GIC SP 0029S2: he is coming home for his dinner - and sleep I think so

FR SP 0030S1: yaah and for me I can say that he is he has seen aah his father coming from sleeping so he is running to her to his mother or maybe her mother and - he is saying that - eh my father is coming - he has got a fish so today we are going [to enjoy] (laughter)

EV GIC  
RP(GIC) 0030aS2: [yes] yaah - he is going quickly to inform [his] mother

RP(GIC) SP 0031S1: [and] yaah to inform his his mother seem he is very happy

EV 0032S2: yah

RP(EV)  
RS 0033S1: very happy (laughs) so /..5../ eh /.../ we can conclude that it is evening a man is coming from fishing and a woman is cooking some food in the picture there are - there is one tree - and two houses the big one with one /.../ and two windows

CPL 0033aS2: door

RS 0034S1: the second one we don't know it is not shown clearly yeah

GIC 0035S2: and there is a boy the picture running towards his mother

GIC 0036S1: yes - and this fish shown is [very big]

RP(W) 0036aS2: [is very big]

SP 0037S1: we don't know what types of fish maybe the Nile fish called 'sangara' (laughs) ('sangara' is the Swahili word for a fresh water fish in Lake Victoria)

ACK 0038S2: Yes (they both laugh)

RP(W) 0039S1: 'sangara'

E 0040S2: very big sangara

0041S1: very big you know look - very nice - you know those people who live nearby lakes, rivers and oceans you know most of them are fishermens are fishermen [their main economic activity is fishing]

E 0041aS2: [this is the main] activities [main activity] [the main activity] yaah you know the main activity of a certain place depends on the geographical conditions of the place] if there is water the main economic activity or main occupation - is automatically fishing yaah

LLQ 0042S1: so [what]

LLQ 0042aS2: [what] can you conclude about what we discussed - I think (.....)

GIC 0043S1: We can say simply that in this picture

ACK 0044S2: yaah

GR 0045S1: it is evening

ACK 0046S2: yaah

GIC 0047S2: and the sun is setting

RP(W) 0048S1: is setting

RPW 0049S2: setting and [there is]

RPW CPL 0049aS1: [there is] mountains eh mountains there

RPW 0050S2: you can see mountains

ACK 0051S1: yah

GIC 0052S2: there is a man in this picture - coming from fishing

ACK 0053S1: yeah

GIC SP 0054S2: and near him there is - we think his boy - he saw him and then he is going for to inform his mother that their [father] is coming

ACK 0054aS2: [yaah]

GIC 0055S1: and

COMPL 0056S2: he is carrying a big fish eh?

RPW 0057S1: a fish yes

SP 0058S2: today we are going to enjoy (both laugh) - a nice meal

RPW 0059S1: a nice dinner (laughs)

RPW 0060S2: a nice dinner yes (laughs)

GIC SP 0061S1: and also his mother is - is working very hard to prepare their dinner - I think this mother is very hard working (they both laugh)

HLQ 0062S2: how can you prove [it?]

GIC 0062aS1: [according] /akuding/ to the picture

RPW 0063S2: according to the picture

RP GIC 0064S1: according to the picture and the size of the pot

CPL 0065S2: is very big

EV E 0066S1: is very big (S1 laughs) compared to [the people] here

RPW 0066aS2: [these people] oh

RPW FR RAC 0067S1: is very big /.../ OK let us end here

RPW 0068S2: end up here - I am afraid Mr Fred that - I didn't speak well - and my voice - is not hiad well because I am suffering from flu (laughs)

4 06 The teacher tells students to go to their respective desks. (0.5 mins)

07 The teacher hands out writing sheets to each students. Students begin writing compositions. (12 mins)

5 08 The teacher collects the written compositions.

09 The teacher dismisses the class

**xv. Tape transcript of the 'Find the Difference' descriptive composition, Pair work, Group 3, Form 2B, School B.**

- |   |                              |  |
|---|------------------------------|--|
| 1 | 01                           | The teacher quickly reviews the model descriptive composition, emphasising how a descriptive composition should be written. (5 mins)   |
|   | 02                           | The teacher removes pictures of the descriptive model composition and arranges students in pairs. (3 mins)   |
| 2 | 03                           | The teacher hands out envelopes containing the writing task (pictures) giving each pair an envelope. (4 mins)  |
|   | 04                           | Each member of the pair carefully studies the picture he is given before the discussion begins. (0.6 mins)   |
| 3 | 05                           | Tape transcript (3.4 mins)   |
|   | FR GIC RP(W)<br>GIC RP (GIC) | 0001S1: Eeh on my picture I can see - the house one house which is big and I can see the tree - and I can see the sun - and the woman - which - cooked cooking and I can see the man - which carrying the fish.  |
|   | LLQ                          | 0002S2: What can you see else in the picture?  |
|   | GIC RP(GIC)                  | 0003S1: There is no I can see the road on my picture - there is no anything  |
|   | GIC<br>RP(GIC)<br>RP(W) GIC  | 0004S2: In my picture there are two houses one is one is big one is bigger than another also I can see a tree and under the tree there is a man a woman - there is a woman cooking /..5./ also I can a man a man running to a woman who - is [cooking] |
|   | REX                          | 0004aS1: [and]   |
|   | GIC                          | 0005S2: /..8./ and I can see a man going to a woman with a stick and I can see also a pot there in which a woman cooking.  |
|   | LLQ                          | 0006S1: Is there anything else?  |
|   | EV GIC                       | 0007S2: No - nothing else  |
|   | FR RAC FR                    | 0008S1: Oh let us compare our picture and see and see the difference - eh  |
|   | GIC                          | 0009S2: in /..9./ see in my picture there is no a sun  |
|   | ACK                          | 0010S1: eeh  |
|   | GIC                          | 0011S2: and there is no a fish in my picture   |
|   | ACK                          | 0012S1: [eh]   |
|   | LLQ                          | 0012aS2: [what] about you  |

GIC SP RP 9GIC0 0013S1: In my picture there is no - a pot - and a man running to the woman - tell about eh - I think he is running to tell about the man comes and - there is no /..8../ a small house - there are no anything else that is the difference

LLQ 0014S2: /..13../ what do you think a woman is cooking in?

GIC SP 0015S1: She is just acting /..12../ I think there is no difference any differences in in our picture

ACK RAC 0016S2: /..8../ OK [let us write the differences]

RP(W) 0016aS1: [let us write the differences]

GIC 0017S2: /..12../ according to the instructions we have been told to write five differences

EV 0018S1: yes

GIC 0019S2: The differences are fish, the sun, a pot, a small house and a man running to the woman

ACK GIC 0020S1: OK that is all

RAC 0021S2: let us write

- 4 06 The teacher tells students to go back to their respective desks (2.5 mins)
- 07 The teacher hands out writing sheets to each student. (21.3 mins)
- 5 08 The teacher collects the written composition (4 mins)
- 09 The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)

**xvi. Tape transcript of the descriptive 'Find the Difference' pair work composition, Group 2, Form 2A, School A.**

1	01	The teacher reviews the previous lesson on the model composition. (5 mins)
	02	The teacher arranges students in pairs (3 mins)
	03	The teacher hands out envelopes containing composition pictures to pairs (groups) for discussion (4 mins)
2	04	Tape transcript (6.4 mins)
	GIC LLQ	0001S1: I can see a man a boy and the woman who is cooking - what about your picture?
	GIC FR LLQ	0002S2: In on my picture I can see a - a one house a tree behind the house and two hills eeh in your picture there is a sun?
	EV	0003S1: No
	GIC	0004S2: It's on (switching on the tape recorder)
	GIC	0005S1: I can see two houses and - at the side of this two houses there is a tree and around the house there is a grass.
	GIC LLQ	0006S2: also and me there is a grasses and there is a man there is a fish - also there is a - road pass through from the house what about on your picture?
	GIC LLQ	0007S1: I can see the man who held a stick and through that way from the bank of the river to the house what do you see again in the picture?
	FR GIC LLQ	0008S2: eeh on my the picture I can see a woman who is cooking food eh on your picture there is a one house?
	EV GIC LLQ	0009S1: No, there is two houses - and - at the woman who is sitting at the traditional chair he is cooking a food and that food who is which is cooking was from the steam what about in your picture?
	FR GIC HLQ	0010S2: Oh on my picture I can see the sunsets - what do you think what time was (.....)
	FR GIC LLQ	0011S1: I can see it's afternoon - no evening what do you see - in your picture?
	GIC	0012S2: On my picture I can see the two hills and the river
	LLQ	0013S1: Do you see a pot in your picture?
	GIC	0014S2: In my picture the there isn't /..5../ there isn't
	HLQ	0015S1: What do you what do you think this time is it?

- SP LLQ 0016S2: Also I think it is - evening eh on your picture do you see a fish?
- EV GIC LLQ 0017S1: No I can't see a fish I can see the man who had a stick on but at the back there is not a fish - what do you see in your picture again Jolly?
- FR GIC LLQ 0018S2: eh on my picture I can see one tree also inside the house I see the dark what are you see in your picture?
- GIC SP 0019S1: I can see a grass - and is I can see the dark I think it is the dark in the house.
- HLQ 0020S2: What do you think this this house was cover was cover with?
- GIC 0021S1: This house is covered by the dark
- RCC 0022S2: and not the grass
- ACK EV 0023S1: aah yes yes
- GIC RAC GIAC RAC 0024S2: This is a grass, it is cover with grass, yes let let us go to the picture and saw the difference - we can see five - differences one one is a boy, a fish, a sun a pot and the and the house I can this is a five difference let us correct on paper /..6../
- GIC RP(W) RP(W) RP(W) RP(GIC) 0025S1: In the picture yes in the picture I can see the man who carry the who carry the who carry the fish and the woman who who is cooking at the pot and the boy who - running towards the woman who is cooking at the picture than I can see the two houses one free and the way pass through - the house from from the river I can see also the sun I can see the grass around the two houses yes yes I can see the river, I can see the hill.
- RCC 0026S2: one hill, one hill?
- CC GIC RP(GIC) RP(W) 0027S1: yes no, it is not one hill is is the hill hills. I can see the grass around the house - I can see the sun is set and the woman who is cooking the food and - the food which is cooking was from the steam I can see also the dark in the house I can see also in the house I can see the house these two houses are covered with grass. What else I can see I can see /.../ no I think that is that is nice
- GIC 0028S2: picture B two houses (he murmurs words to his colleague)
- EV 0029S1: No this is complete

3 05

The teacher instructs group members to go back to their respective places (2 mins)

06

The teacher gives writing sheets to each group member to write a composition. (14.4 mins)



4	07	The teacher collects the written composition (5 mins)
	08	The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)

**xvii. Transcript of the teacher fronted narrative task Form 2A, School A.**

1	01	The teacher puts up pictures of the previous model composition and reminds students about it (5 mins)	
	02	The teacher tells students about what they are going to do and then pins up new pictures on the board near the blackboard (0.3 mins)	
2	03	The teacher asks some questions about the pictures he has put up (5 mins)	
3	04	Tape transcript (1.4 mins)	
	RAC LLQ RP(Q)	0001T:	Let's go very quickly over them- what do you see here? eeh what do you see (the last word is said with a rising intonation)
	GIC	0002S1:	I can see a man pulling up his bicycle
	RP(W) RP(W) NO	0003T:	pulling up eeh - pulling up his bicycle- another (with a rising intonation)
	GIC	0004S2:	I can see a car on the road
	RP(W) LLQ EV NO	0005T:	a car on the road- what more (the last word is said with a rising intonation) /..6../ yaah (rising intonation)
	GIC	0006S3:	I can see a man near near the car
	RP(W) LLQ NO	0007T:	a man is near the car /.../ and and lastly yes (with a rising intonation)
	GIC	0008S4:	I can see the boxes
	RP(W) RP(GIC) LLQ NO	0009T:	boxes so you can see a man changing his bicycle tyre- and- some boxes there is a car pick up- and a man who is near it- second picture - what do you see? this second picture /..6../ eeh second picture what do you see? /..5../
	GIC	0010S5:	I can see the man jumping from his bicycle
	RP(W) LLQ EV NO	0011T:	a man jumping off a bicycle his bicycle- what do you see more (a rising intonation) yes eeh (rising intonation) i don't know your name /?/ unfortunately
4	05	The teacher stops for a while and spends a little time taking students to task for not volunteering as expected to answer the questions (0.2 mins)	
		Tape transcript (6.1 mins)	
	GIC	0012S1:	I can see a man standing on the side of the road
	RP(W) EV LLQ	0013T:	a man standing on the side of the road yes what more eeh (a rising intonation)

RP(W) LLQ	0015T:	three boxes where are they? where are the boxes?three boxes where?
GIC	0016S6:	in the road
RP(W) GIF RP(W) LLQ NO	0017T:	on the road not in the road on the road (he stresses the prepositional phrase)- three boxes are on the road- third picture what do you see? what are they these people here ? /..9../ mmh (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0018S1:	the man /.../ is standing on the road
RCC	0019T:	the (with a rising intonation)
RP(W)	0020S1:	is standing on the road
LLQ	0021T:	what are they?
RP(GIC)	0022S1:	the man is standing on the road
RCC	0023T:	only one man (with a rising intonation) one man is standing on the road mmh (a risingintonation)/.../
GIC RP(W)	0024S2:	three man are standing in the road on the road with his bicycle with one bicycle
EV RP (GIC)	0025T:	aha there is a bicycle three men on the road
GIC	0026S1:	I can see a policeman taking a statement
RP(W)	0027T:	a policeman taking a statement- a policeman taking a statement
GIC	0028S6:	I can see a houes
RCC NO	0029T:	there is a house there mmh yes (a rising intonation)
GIC	0030S7:	I can see the car
RP(W) RP(GIC) LLQ	0031T:	a car there is also a car mmh what more (a rising intonation)
GIC	0032S8:	I can see one policeman stopping a car
EV GIC NO	0033T:	ah yes yes I know the policeman is stopping the car - picture number four- yes (a rising intonation)
GIC	0034S9:	/.../ I can see a car moving on the road
RP(W) RCC	0035T:	a car moving on the road moving on the road eeh?
GIC	0036S10:	I can see one box felling down
EV RP(GIC)	0037T:	yes a box one box falling around on the (.....)
GIC	0038S11:	I can see a man riding a bicycle
EV RP (GIC)	0039T:	yes behind the car there is a man riding a bicycle

GIC	0040S1:	I can see two peoples one of them is holding a bicycle
RP(W) EV	0041T:	two people eeh yes two people one of them is holding a bicycle - eeh (a rising intonation)
RCC GIC	0042S12:	I can see two policemen
EV RP(W) CPL RP(W) GIC LLQ NO	0043T:	yes two policemen looking at them eh two policemen looking at them eeh /..5../ two men one is holding a bicycle one is eeh talking they are talking and three policeman looking at them - last picture? last picture yes (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0044S2:	I can see a man getting out from his car
RP(GIC) E LLQ	0045T:	a man is getting out of his car a driver is getting out of his car- more (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0046S13:	I can see three boxes falling down
RP(W) RP(W) EV NO	0047T:	three boxes- falling down-falling down - mmh yes (a rising intonation)
GIC	0048S14:	I can see the man /?/ (inaudible due to pupils' coughing in the class) pushing on the road boxes
RP (GIC) RCC	0049T:	three boxes are down there a man is pushing boxes pushing the boxes- is he pushing the boxes eeh?
EV	0050S15:	no
EV GIC LLQ	0051T:	no no he is not pushing the boxes but eeh (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0052S16:	I can see a man pulling out his bicycle
RP(W) HLQ RP(Q)	0053T:	pulling out his bicycle why is he pulling out his bicycle? what is the reason for him pulling out his bicycle? what is it? what is happening?
GIC	0054S17:	three boxes fallen down the bicycle
EV RP(W) HLQ	0055T:	yes three boxes one box or three boxes fell on his bicycle- and what happened when the boxes fell on his bicycle? the bicycle (.....) (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0056S18:	now it will be an accident
EV RP(GIC) E RP(W) FR GIC R REV	0056T:	yes it was an accident yes three boxes fell on a bicycle the bicycle was now eeh (.....) was damaged .The bicycle was damaged you can see the bicycle here yaah.Thebicycle was damaged that's why he was pulling it from the boxes- the boxes damaged his boxes the boxes fell on his bicycle and so they damaged his the bicycle and so the owner of the bicycle was pulling it out from the boxes isn't it? Is it clear?
FV	0057Ss:	yes

- |   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| 5 | 06 | The teacher tells the students about the exercise and hands out writing sheets to each. Students begin writing compositions (16.6 mins) |
| 6 | 07 | The teacher collects the written compositions (5 mins)  |
|   | 08 | The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)  |

### xviii. Teacher fronted narrative composition, Form 2B, School A.

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | 01   | The teacher pins up the model narrative composition pictures and asks quite a substantial number of questions (6 mins)   |
| 2 | 03   | The teacher removes the model narrative composition pictures and puts up instead, the narrative writing task pictures. He doesn't ask questions about the pictures but merely reminds students about the model as a guide. (7.5 mins)  |
| 3 | 04   | Tape transcript (2.5 mins)   |
|   | FR GIC DIN<br>GIC<br>RAC<br><br>RCC<br><br>EV                        | 0001T: so I am going to pin these pictures here so that everybody may see it and write - you are going to write what you have said- what I have taught you .Study them closely /..5../ you will do as what you have done- but the story is a nice one a very good story but- these pictures are mixed they are mixed- they are not arranged as we have arranged here- one two three four five six eeh you are going to arrange the story they are mixed the actions are mixed - eeh do you understand ?  |
|   | FR GIC<br>GIC RAC<br>RP(GIC)<br>DIN<br>RP(GIC)<br><br>REV<br><br>ACK | 0002Ss: yes<br><br>0003T: (The teacher pins up the six pictures of the Narrative composition exercise on the blackboard) eeh it is not a - a logical order as the one which I put on the blackboard before (referring to the model narrative composition pictures on the 'Monkey story' which he has just removed) on the board before /.../ they are mixed the events are mixed- now you are going to arrange them well so that they follow a sequence the sequence is logical the sequence is a logical one even following another- after this event then came another event then came another event so it must be a logical sequence a logical sequence of events eeh don't mix them up. I don't know which comes first I don't know you are going to arrange it for me of course you are going to write a story 'unaelewa?' (Swahili for 'Do you understand?') |
|   | DIN REV<br>RP(REV) GIC<br>FR LLQ GIC                                 | 0004Ss: 'Ndiyo' (Swahili for 'yes')<br><br>0005T: You are going to write a story concerning these two pictures /..5../ any questions ? Any questions before we start? Do you have any questions before we begin? I have give you a model- one day a man was sitting down /?/ you have /?/ yes how many minutes (he looks at his watch) - you have enough time  |
| 4 | 05   | The teacher issues writing sheets to each student and students write compositions (18.8 mins)  |
| 5 | 06   | The teacher collects the written compositions (5 mins)   |
|   | 07   | The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)   |

**xix. Tape transcript of the teacher-fronted narrative composition, Form 2A, School B.**

- |   |                  |  |  |
|---|------------------|--|--|
| 1 | 01               | The teacher pins up pictures of the previous model narrative composition (The Monkey Story) and reminds them of the characteristics of a narrative composition. (3.4 mins)   |  |
|   | 02               | The teacher removes the model composition and pins up pictures of the narrative composition exercise instead. He apologises that he has to go to a staff meeting and requests the researcher to carry on with the lesson. (0.2 mins) |  |
| 2 | 03               | The 'teacher' asks students a few questions about the pictures before telling them to write his composition. (0.5 mins)  |  |
| 3 | 04               | Tape transcript (6.1 mins)   |  |
|   | LLQ              | 0001T:   | What can you see on the picture? Now just try first of all to say what you see and then try to tell me what did happen on this picture.  |
|   | GIC              | 0002S1:  | I can see the car - and boxes two - three men and there is a bicycle.  |
|   | GIC LLQ          | 0003T:   | So he says he can see a car a man who is doing - what is he doing?   |
|   | GIC              | 0004S2:  | Opening the door of the car.   |
|   | RP (GIC) HLQ     | 0005T:   | Opening the (.....) opening the door of the car - this is not a car by the way it is not a car - it is a pick up van or simply a pick up, so a van is a vehicle - now what do you think what do you think this building is? What type of building is this? Is is - a normal residence in other words is it a house where somebody lives or do you think it has got something to do? What sort of building is this? /..5../ yes (said with rising intonation) |
|   | NO               |  |  |
|   | GIC              | 0006S3:  | These buildings are shops  |
|   | EV LLQ           | 0007T:   | Yeah, looks like a shop isn't it?  |
|   | EV               | 0008Ss:  | yes  |
|   | HLQ              | 0009T:   | What makes you think it is a shop? /.../ What makes you think that it is a shop? What makes you think it is a shop? - not a factory not a workshop not a hotel nor a theatre but a shop - what makes you think that it is a shop?  |
|   | GIC              | 0010S5:  | because it is beside besides of road   |
|   | EV ACK FR HLQ NO | 0011T:   | yeah beside the road but I can also have a factory at - beside the road isn't it OK now go thank you very much but what makes you think that it is a shop? /..6../ what makes you think that it is a shop? /..10../ yes ahh (said with a rising intonation)  |

GIC	0012S6:	because there are - they have - they are some burdens - which I think it come from that house.
RCC	0013T:	There are some (.....)
GIC	0014S6:	some burdens
RP(W) HLQ	0015T:	Burdens. What are burdens? (said with a stress on the last word)
GIF	0016S6:	Boxes
ACK NO	0017T:	Aah boxes - so he meant boxes so he meant boxes not burdens. You what are burdens you know what are burdens - yes you know why he said a burden.
EV	0018Sx:	Yes
SP HLQ	0019T:	So I think the gentleman was talking - was translating from Swahili isn't it? (laughs)
EV	0020Ss:	(most of the students smile) Yaah
ACK GIF	0021T:	Right it is not a burden. This is not pronounced as 'baden' but as a 'bedn'. Now a burden is not the same thing as luggage. Look - you have luggage you don't have plural for luggage - you simply have pieces of luggage or luggage. Now a burden is not a luggage. You see - what is a burden? (the class remains silent for five seconds)
GIF	0022T:	If I ask you do you find it a burden to learn mathematics, do you find it a burden to stay out in the dark or do you find it a burden to carry heavy loads of boxes for example so a burden is not a luggage. In Swahili it may mean the same but not in English eeh - a burden - you cannot see a burden but can see luggage can't you?
EV	0023S:	/..5../ yes
FR GIF	0024T:	Aah, so a burden is something that troubles you - something that troubles you is a burden - a burden and something that you can carry is luggage.
EV	0025S:	yes
ACK GIF	0026T:	OK so this man is carrying so you have got three pieces of luggage - not three luggages but three pieces
CPL	0027Ss:	/..5../ luggage
EV GIC LLQ NO	0028T:	Ah good so you have got one box - two and then three now - it appears as if this is a shop because it has got long windows. This is (points at the pictures). Looks a long door, a wooden door so it looks like a shop. Now in the second picture what can you see? /..../ in the second picture, yes?



	GIC	0029S7:	In the second picture I see a four (.....)
	RCC	0030T:	Pardon
	GIC	0031S7:	the four [man] then whose two of them are /?/
	EV	0031aT:	[mmh]
	GIC	0032S7:	[the other] (.....)
	EV GIC GIF	0033T:	[two of... yes] yes so we can see four men two of whom - not whose but two of whom - whom whom - not whose - I say they are four men two of whom are (.....)
	CPL	0034Sy:	civilians
4	05		The teacher writes on the blackboard the use of the prepositional phrase 'of whom' (0.1 mins)
5	06		Tape transcript (5.4 mins)
	EV GIF HLQ NO	0035T:	civilians (said with a stress) oh good - could be civilians isn't it - because these are - policemen - these are civilians - those who lead a civilised /?/ - those who are members of the armed forces - they are not policemen nor are they soldiers so you see them here alright good what do you think is happening /../ what do you think is happening here - what do you think is happening here /..10../ Anybody? Kajenje? (Nominates a student)
	SP	0036S7:	I think those civilians are talking about something and those two policemen are coming to the -to the /?/
	EV HLQ	0037T:	Now from the appearance - thank you very much - from the appearance of these two men do they look to be sad or happy? Do they appear to be sad or happy Kajenje?
	GIC	0038S7:	They appear to be sad
	HLQ	0039T:	Why are they sad? Why do you think they are sad?
	GIC	0040S8:	Because that boy has got an accident
	EV LLQ	0041T:	Aha - how do we know that he has got an accident - how do we know - what shows in the picture that he might have - has met an accident? /.../ yes /..5../
	GIC	0042S9:	I can know because those the one who take the bicycle in front of the tyre was bending

EV GIC	FR GIC FR HLQ	0043T:	Good, the front tyre is bent - is not as round as the as the hind one - the front tyre is bent we can see that it is bent here at the spot and the wheel though the wheel is not in its normal position is position is bent so he is sad and he seems to be arguing he seems to be exchanging some angry words with him - at the moment he is only looking at his bicycle - he doesn't seem to be saying anything but he seems not to be happy. Now we don't know - probably this will be the man who fell off the bicycle and see he has a bicycle falling /?/ and we have /?/ box. Now what could have caused him to fall off his bicycle - what do you think might have caused him to fall off his bicycle?
GIC		0044S1:	The bicycle knocked the boxes.
EV GIC FR	FR HLQ	0045T:	Good the boxes - the boxes have obstructed or rather have eh come in between the bicycle, therefore because they are just blocking the road it cannot pass so you see that he falls. Now this is the same boy whose bicycle wheel is bent. Now can you see that the man is /?/ what do you think this man is going to do? He seems to be the owner of this pick up van - yes, isn't he?
EV		0046Ss:	Yes
ACK HLQ NO HLQ		0047T:	Alright why do you think he comes out of the van. Why does he come out of the van? Why do you think he comes out of the van - anybody? At the back at the back? Yes why do you think he comes out of the van and is heading towards this direction. /..5../ He should be going his way because he had he was already in his pick up van but he seems to stop, gets out of the van and comes this way. Why does he come to this point? /..8../ Yes, OK, thank you get seated (He tells the student who offers to respond to sit down)
GIC			
HLQ			
EV ACK DIN			
GIC		0048Sy:	/..5../ /?/ from the pick up
EV GIC		0049T:	so he checked that there is only one box remaining in the pick up van so and he sees this from the back tyre so he gets somewhat concerned about what is happening and /?/ simply checks what may have happened. Well we don't know whether he is he might be here - we are not quite sure. Now what do you think is happening here?
FR GIC			
HLQ			
6	07	The 'teacher' explains that the pictures he has been asking about are not in order and that they have to think of their logical sequence when writing a composition. (0.4 mins)	
7	08	Tape transcript (3.1 mins)	
		HLQ	0050T: Now what do you think happens is happening here. What is the man doing? what is the man doing? What is this man doing? What do you think he is doing? /..7../

GIC	0051S6:	The man is trying to explain to the policeman what has happened.
EV LLQ	0052T:	Ah who is he?
GIC	0053S6:	He is - he is the owner of the car
EV GIC	0054T:	Thank you very much. He is the owner of the pick up so he is probably going to explain what happened and - what can you see what does this man have with him - he has got something in his hands - what does he have with him - yes (said with a rising intonation)
LLQ		
	0055S10:	/?/
GIC LLQ	0056T:	So he takes notes about what happened - and what is his friend at the back doing? /..8./ what is his friend at the back doing?
GIC	0057S10:	He is leading other car in order to avoid an accident.
EV GIC	0058T:	Mmh! Thank you, right - so as you can see he is making a signal he is making a sign to stop the right hand side tells the cars to stop whereas the left hand is showing them what? what is the left hand doing? What does this left hand mean? when he does this (the 'teacher' demonstrates with his left hand) what does the policeman want to do? What is telling them to do? What is he telling them to do? Look at his left hand - What is he telling them to do? /..12./ What is he telling them to do? /.../ Yaah what do you think he is telling them what to do?
HLQ RP(Q)		
DIN LLQ RP(Q)		
HLQ		
SP	0059S11:	I think he is he is arranging the - the road which cars should pass.
EV GIF GIC RP(W)	0060T:	Very good - the right word is <i>directing</i> . He is directing the cars or showing the way they should go so he is directing them to another route or he is showing them another direction which they should follow so as to avoid the accident. This is what is happening in this picture.

7	09	The 'teacher' reminds students again how to do the exercise before giving each writing sheets for writing the composition. Students begin writing. (18 mins)
8	10	The 'teacher' collects the written composition. (5 mins)
	11	The 'teacher' dismisses the class. (0.2 mins)

**xx. Transcript of the teacher fronted narrative composition, Form 2B, School B.**

- |   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| 1 | 01 | The teacher reminds the students about the previous lesson's model narrative ('Monkey') pictures and pins up the pictures on the blackboard. (0.4 mins) |
|   | 02 | The teacher removes the model and puts up the lesson's narrative task pictures (1.5 mins)   |
| 2 | 03 | The teacher asks questions about the pictures. (2 mins)   |
| 3 | 04 | Tape transcript (8.5 mins)  |
- 
- |   |         |  |
|---|---------|--|
| FR LLQ RP(Q)<br>NO                            | 0001T:  | Now what can you see - what can you see on this /..5../ picture? yes?  |
| GIC   | 0002S1: | There are two men who they are talking the - besides them there are two policemen.   |
| RCC NO  | 0003T:  | Is that all? Somebody else for a - some informations   |
| GIC   | 0004S2: | In that picture I can see two policemen two people and one - one bicycle. The /tail/ is bending.   |
| FR GIC FR<br>RAC HLQ NO                       | 0005T:  | OK - so that you can see two policemen and - two civilians /.../ and a bicycle it has been knocked may be - oh let's go to the third one - what do you think in the third picture happened? /..8../ How can you describe it? What can you see in short? Yes? |
| GIC RP(W)<br>RP(W) RP GIC                     | 0006S3: | In the third picture I can see three boxes and one - and one man who has - who has the bicycle and - and and beating the boxes and he fell - he felling down.  |
| EV RCC FR<br>EV NO GIC<br>HLQ RPQ NO          | 0007T:  | Good. Is that all? OK, you have tried your level best. And that's for me - somebody else - to explain? /..28../ I can see something like /?/ material here - What do you think it is? mmh? /../ What do you think is this? /..13../ It can be /..5../ mmh?   |
| SP  | 0008S4: | I think that is a - wooden boxes   |
| EV RP(EV)<br>LLQ FR NO<br>LLQ HLQ<br>RP(Q) NO | 0009T:  | OK, OK. Those are /?/ house and things about - /..5../ OK, picture number four? /.../ what can you see or what can you describe it? What do you think in the fourth picture happened? /..9../ What can you see in the picture? OK (with a rising intonation) |
| GIC   | 0010S5: | At the fourth picture I saw a - a motorcar with boxes and behind them there is a man which is - who is driving a bicycle.  |
| EV NO   | 0011T:  | Mmh. Good - tried your level best. Another one? Mmh?   |

		GIC RP(GIC) RP(W) RP(W) RP(W) RP(W) RP(W) RP(W) GIC	0012S6:	In the picture I can see that - I can see a car which droving on the road and - the car the car carrying carrying - the boxes and one boxes box started to fell - and the man who going the bicycle /?/
		EV GIC LLQ RP(Q) NO	0013T:	OK, that's about - all about picture number one and number four (.....) Now picture number five? /..30../ mmh? /..8../ what can you see? /..14../ Yes?
		GIC RP(GIC) RP(W) RP(W) RP(W)	0014S7:	I can see the man - the man was driving a bicycle his bend he is bend the bicycle - and the driver who was driving away he is up /.../ was - was come come in front of the man who was who was behind his bicycle.
		EV GIC FR NO GIC LLQ RP(Q)	0015T:	Mmh. Yaah he tried his level best but I am sure that can explain more than that much about that picture, OK let us come to the last one - number six - what can you see there? There are some people /..8../ what do you think is difficult with? what are they? /.../ again?
		GIC REP(GIC)	0016S8:	He see there was a man and - and the - the driver of the car and the man who was driving the bicycle - together they are making flatness.
		EV GIC	0017T:	OK. Again we can explain more about that picture /..5../
4	05	The teacher explains to the class the way they should do the exercise after, firstly, reminding them about the model narrative (the Monkey story). (2.25 mins)		
	06	The teacher hands out the writing sheets to each student. Students begin writing their compositions. (20.2 mins)		
5	07	The teacher collects the written compositions (5 mins)		
	08	The teacher dismisses the class (0.1 mins)		

**xxi. Tape transcript of the teacher fronted descriptive composition, Form 2B, School B.**

- |   |    |   |  |
|---|----|---|--|
| 1 | 01 | The teacher puts up pictures of the descriptive composition task. He reviews, firstly, the model composition. (1.9 mins)  |  |
|   | 02 | The teacher draws the students' attention to the new pictures of the descriptive composition assignment, reminding them of the requirements to be met in writing up a descriptive composition. (4.6 mins) |  |
| 2 | 03 | Tape transcript (1.6 mins)  |  |
|   |    | FR LLQ<br>FR LLQ<br>RP(FR)  | 0001T: Anyway by introduction what can you see /..5../ in this picture - forget about this (points at the pictures of the model composition) because this is another. (He removes the model pictures and rolls them up.) Now this is the picture now you are going to write about. /..5../ What can you see roughly there in the picture - before writing? |
|   |    | GIC   | 0002S1: I can see two houses   |
|   |    | LLQ NO  | 0003T: /..10../ only two houses? /..5../ yes?  |
|   |    | GIC   | 0004S2: I can see one tree   |
|   |    | RP(W) RCC   | 0005T: one tree - only two houses and one tree?  |
|   |    | GIC   | 0006S3: /..5../ I can see two men and one woman  |
|   |    | RP(W) RCC   | 0007T: two men and one woman - only that?  |
|   |    | GIC   | 0008S1: I can see the sun  |
|   |    | RP(W) ACK   | 0009T: you can see the sun mmh only that?  |
|   |    | GIC   | 0010S1: /..8../ also I can see the cooking pot   |
|   |    | RP(W) ACK<br>GIC  | 0011T: cooking pot, OK, those are the things or objects which are seen in this picture (.....)   |
| 3 | 04 | The teacher again tells students what they are required to do while writing down the composition. (1.6 mins)  |  |
|   | 05 | The teacher distributes writing sheets to each student, and students begin writing (23.7 mins)  |  |
| 4 | 06 | The teacher collects the written compositions. (6.3 mins)   |  |
|   | 07 | The teacher dismisses the class. (0.2 mins)   |  |

**xxii. Tape transcript of the 'Find the Difference' (Descriptive composition) Pair work, Group 2, Form 2B, School A.**

- |   |    |  |  |
|---|----|--|--|
| 1 | 01 | The teacher pins up pictures of the model descriptive composition and reviews the previous lesson on how to write a descriptive composition.(5 mins) |  |
| 2 | 02 | The teacher asks a few questions on the picture (5 mins)   |  |
|   |    | The teacher arranges students in pairs and then hands out an envelope containing the picture-composition sheets to each group (2.5 mins)             |  |
| 3 | 04 | Each member of the pair takes out a picture-sheet from the envelope and studies it before the discussion begins (2.5 mins)                           |  |
| 4 | 05 | Tape transcript (4.2 mins)   |  |
|   |    | GIC RP(W)<br>GIC RP(W)   | 0001S1: In this picture A we can see a woman a woman who is sitting near the -fire but in picture B we can see a woman who is sitting near the fire and is cooking some food and in picture B -there is no sun which is appear in this picture -also in picture A you can see a man - who is come from fishing but in picture- picture B picture B no man who is come from fishing - also in picture B you can see -../ you can see a boy he is running but in picture A no man no boy who is running - also in picture B there is a there are- three people but in picture A only one only two people who are there- in picture A you can see also a man who is carrying a - a fish but in picture B -no man who is carrying a fish-also /..7../ also if you can see in picture A it appear like in the morning but in picture B you - can't know if- it is- if whether is - is in the morning or not yes - in picture B you can see also /.../ eh you can see also a boy who is - going near fire but in picture A (.....) |
|   |    | RP(W)  |  |
|   |    | RP(GIC)  |  |
|   |    | RP(W)  |  |
|   |    | RP(W)  |  |
|   |    | FR   |  |
|   |    | CPL GIC<br>SP  | 0002S2: but no boy who is going near the fire also in picture A it appear that - all of the things which are which are there are beyond- the lake- or the river but in picture B- you can't know /.../ what is there- also /..6../ in picture B there are two houses one is very small and the other is [ bigger ] than the one  |
|   |    | CPL  | 0002aS1: [ bigger ]  |
|   |    | GIC  | 0003S2: in picture A there is a man who is come from fishing but in picture B no man who is come from [fishing]  |
|   |    | CPL  | 0003aS1: [fishing]   |
|   |    | GIC  | 0004S2: also in picture A you can see a sun which is rising above the (the last word is said with a rising intonation)[ hill ]   |
|   |    | CPL  | 0004aS1: [ the hill ]  |
|   |    | SP RAC   | 0005S1: I think we have finished our discussion. <i>Sijui tuzime</i> (Swahili for 'Should we switch off the machine?')   |

	EV	0006S2: <i>Tuzime</i> (let us switch it off)
5	06	The teacher tells students to go back to their respective desks and hands out writing sheets to each. Students write compositions (18 mins)
6	07	The teacher collects the written compositions (2.5 mins)
	08	The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)



**xxiii. Tape transcript of the Narrative composition, Groupwork, Form 2B, School B.**

- |   |            |  |
|---|------------|--|
| 1 | 01         | The teacher reviews the previous narrative composition stressing on how a narrative composition should be written (0.2 mins)   |
| 2 | 02         | The teacher arranges students in groups of six (0.1 mins)  |
|   | 03         | The teacher distributes envelopes in which are smaller envelopes for group members. Group members study the pictures before the discussion begins. (0.5 mins)        |
| 3 | 04         | Tape transcript (8.8 mins) (Nothing is heard before this exchange, indicating that the pupils could have forgotten to switch on the audio recorder when they began.) |
|   | GIC        | 0001S1: to to punctual on his job usually  |
|   | RCC        | 0002S2: that's all   |
|   | CC         | 0003S1: so- I think this man is try to equalize /..5./ [information]   |
|   | RP(W)      | 0003aS2: [ information ]   |
|   | CC SP      | 0004S1: and- and try to to say anything for this dri /?/ going to /?/ so i think (.....)   |
|   | SP         | 0005S2: it seems that that man who was driving a bicycle   |
|   | EV         | 0006S1: yes  |
|   | GIC        | 0007S2: it has got injury  |
|   | EV         | 0008S1: eh yes   |
|   | GIC        | 0009S2: because he is very angry   |
|   | EV GIC     | 0010S1: eh and this accident is very bigger  |
|   | ACK SP     | 0011S3: yes I think he is up hunting for a driver  |
|   | LLQ        | 0012S1: which one?   |
|   | GIC RP(W)  | 0013S3: that ro (.....) that boy   |
|   | ACK GIC SP | 0014S1: oh that boy and and you must rememaber that his bicycle - is get- a crack on his bicycle- so I think eh (laughs)   |
|   | GIC        | 0015S3: you can see the ring   |
|   | EV GIC     | 0016S1: yes the ring it [ got ]  |
|   | CPL        | 0017aS3: [ it is already broken ]  |
|   | EV GIC SP  | 0018S1: yes already broken and so I think when /.../ it got a medicine after it got a medicine - he must a he [must]   |

CPL	0018aS2:	[repair]
RP(W)	0019S1:	and repair it
RCC	0020S3:	but myself want to ask a question about one picture- the first picture
LLQ	0021S1:	which one?
LLQ	0022S2:	the picture about this box it belongs to whom? (with a rising intonation) that boy or the /dreva/( with a rising intonation)
FR GIC	0023S1:	oh this box is kept in the - on the-pick up van [ so ]
LLQ RP(Q)	0023aS3:	[but what]
		what is their woman but that he /?/
GIC	0024S1:	so the owner of that box is driver
RP(W) RP(W) SP	0025S1:	is a driver (.....) is a driver his van so I think- this box was not -put in - in [ in order ]
RP(W)	0025aS3:	[ in ]
EV RP(W)	0026S1:	oh yes in order
GIC	0027S3:	that's why it is falling down
EV	0028S1:	yes
HLQ	0029S2:	what do you think where he is - where he was putting - where he was travelling to put these boxes
RCC	0030S1:	oh you can repeat
GIC	0031S2:	I asking that this - this man who is driving a van
EV	0032S1:	yes
HLQ	0033S2:	where was he going going?
SP	0034S1:	I think this man is going a- to to- [ I think he is taking these boxes]
CPL	0034aS2:	[ somewhere ]
EV GIC	0035S1:	yes somewhere and he is going to put these boxes somewhere else so I don't know where he came from and where he goes
FR EV	0036S2:	oh thank you
LLQ	0037S1:	another question - for the others?
NO	0038S2:	Mr. Msengi what about you?
LLQ	0039S1:	What else can you see in this picture - there are

GIC 0040S4: (in a low tone) There is nothing

NO 0041S1: Mr. Habyalimana (with a rising intonation)

GIC 0042S5: I want to ask a question about third picture

NO 0043S1: yes please (with a rising intonation)

GIC 0044S5: when you when you see that man

EV 0045S1: yes

GIC 0046S5: he is trying to take this box - that is true - when you see

RCC 0047S1: which one (with a rising intonation)

CC 0048S5: here

RCC 0049S1: this boy

GIC 0050S5: in fact his bicycle eh /?/ beside and he try to take this box

SP 0051S1: I think after the accident

EV 0052S5: Mhh

GIC RP(W) 0053S1: the bicycle is the- the - the- the ring of- the ring tyre ring after is cracking on the- crash on the box

ACK 0054S5: on the box yes mmh

GIC 0055S1: after crashing the boy is trying in this picture number three the boy is trying to pull out eeh in order to check his 'taili' (Swahili for tyre)

LLQ SP 0056S6: How about yours but I think the taili was bursting

EV LLQ 0057S1: eeh i think /..10../ is there any question about the this picture B ?

GIC 0058Sx: for me I think no question I don't know about the rest

LLQ RP(GIC) 0059S1: /..36../ I can now ask a question /.../ in picture number in picture number five where do you see between these- two these two men- one is a boy and one eh is - driver the driver is you see you saw when the driver I can saw the driver is worried - what you can say about this two differe between boy and (.....)

GIC 0060S2: because the boy- if he is facing that man

EV 0061S1: yes

LLQ 0062S2: it is it is usually he he / wod/ /?/

EV 0063S1: yes (with a rising intonation)

SP 0064S2: because that man- I think it is the old man

EV SP 0065S1: oh yes- so in picture number three I think this man he wants to eeh cost his boy some money (The teacher passes around as they are discussing and encourages them to continue)

SP 0066S2: it may be so

EV 0067S1: yes

GIC 0068S2: because that man is the one who seems that he got a lot of money

EV 0069S1: yes

GIC LLQ 0070S2: because the boy has done something eeh (.....) /?/

EV GIC 0071S1: yaah (.....) /?/ this man came the man to worried so /..8../ he he ask [ a sorry ]

CPL 0071aS2: [ something ]

EV GIC 0072S1: eh the policeman so I think this story we finish this story

EV 0073S2: yes

LLQ 0074S4: is that the end?

RAC 0075S1: so everybody can see in the - can see in the - can see eeh for the first- for the last -these pictures

EV 0076S2: yes

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 4 | 05 | All members of the group again study the order in which the pictures are arranged before going back to their respective desks (1.5 mins)             |
| 5 | 06 | The teacher tells students to go back to their respective desks and gives out writing sheets to each. Students begin writing compositions. (19 mins) |
| 6 | 07 | The teacher collects the written composition (10 mins)   |
|   | 08 | The teacher dismisses the class (0.1 mins)   |

**xxiv. Tape transcript of the Narrative composition, Group work, Form 2A, School A.**

- |   |                       |  |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | 01                    | The teacher presents pictures of the model composition which he puts on the notice board in a haphazard order. He asks students questions about the pictures and then explains about the format and the language features of a narrative (2.2 mins)  |
| 2 | 02                    | The teacher arranges students in a group of six (0.3 mins)   |
|   | 03                    | The teacher hands out to each group an envelope in which are six smaller envelopes having pictures of the composition exercise (1.5 mins)  |
| 3 | 04                    | Students study the pictures carefully before the discussion begins (2 mins)  |
| 4 | 05                    | Tape transcript (4.4 mins)   |
|   | LLQ                   | 0001S1: What can you see in your picture?  |
|   | GIC LLQ               | 0002S2: Two house(said in a low tone) -what can you see in your picture?   |
|   | GIC                   | 0003S1: In my picture I can see that there is an accident of a car a long time ago.  |
|   | LLQ PR(Q)             | 0004S3: What do you see in your picture? What can you see in your picture?   |
|   | GOC<br>RP(GIC)        | 0005S4: In my picture I can see a man standing in front-a big house and also in front of that man can see a man-who is standing his his/.5./ luggage three boxes and one basket and in front of him is a car and-that car is/.../ standing-and a driver opened the door with- the man who have the luggage |
|   | LLQ                   | 0006S1: What can you see in your picture?  |
|   | GIC                   | 0007S5: I can see one man standing in front of the lights and one is driving a bicycle and there is the accident and I can see three boxes on the road yes.  |
|   | LLQ                   | 0008S1: What can you see in the picture?   |
|   | GIC<br>RP(GIC)<br>GIC | 0009S6: I can see the man carrying a bicycle and three boxes and in front of him and I can see the man far away come to see what is happening. There was a -car carrying a- box and going away eeh what can you see?   |
|   | GIC                   | 0010Sx: I can see two people in front the house and-and I can see the car /.6../ which is carry the box the three boxes  |
|   | REX                   | 0011S6: /..18../ What else?  |
|   | E<br>RP(Q)            | 0012Sy: Behind the car- there was a man- who is riding the bicycle   |

	LLQ	0013S1:	/..8../ What is what can you see in your picture?
	GIC RP(W) FR	0014S2:	I can see two policeman and one man who is /..6../ who is riding a bicycle/..../ that is all
	DIN	0015S1:	/..3../ Collect the cards and arrange properly (students spend about one minute and forty five seconds arranging the picture cards in a logical order)
5	06		The teacher interrupts the discussion and begins to state how the narrative composition is written (though his explanations seem overtly relevant to a descriptive composition) (2 mins)
6	07		Students resume their discussion before switching on the audio tape (0.5 mins)
7	08		Tape transcript (3.1 mins)
	FR LLQ	0016S4:	OK, Ima what happened about the story?
	GIC SP GIC EXP ELAB	0017S2:	/..6../ In this story I think there is a certain car loading some-boxes and behind this car there is a man riding his bicycle- aside the road there is a certain woman and a woman standing in front of the houses-because /..5../ and when the car was going on-one box- three boxes fall from the car and /..9../ and falling on the bicycle which the man was riding - at the side of the road the man who was standing outside the house was shocking after the boxes was falling from the car and /..15../ and the accident was already occur- then the man who was inside who was driving the car after recognizing that the boxes were falling down he stopped the car and opened the door- thenhe got he get out and start moving towards the man who was been falling who was been accidentured /..15../ when-when he was when the driver was reaching there and started talking with the man who was driving the bicycle aside them the two policemen were coming towards them /..../ one of the policemen started talking started taking some statement and one one another was stopping around and also I can see a man who was driving a car talking with- the policeman and the one whom driving a bicycle was standing between the policeman and the man who was driving the car. That's all I can say about the story.
8	09		The teacher tells students to sit on their respective desks and distributes writing sheets to each. Later, students begin writing (22.9 mins)
9	10		The teacher collects the written compositions. (4 mins)

**xxv. Transcript of the Narrative composition, Group work, Form 2B, School B.**

- |   |                               |  |
|---|-------------------------------|--|
| 1 | 01                            | The teacher puts up pictures of the model narrative composition (about the Monkey story) reminding students about the stages or sequences in the story. He asks a few questions on the story and finally reviews it with the students (10 mins)                      |
|   | 02                            | The teacher removes the model composition pictures and arranges students in groups of six for discussion (3 mins)  |
| 2 | 03                            | The teacher hands out the envelope to each group and each member takes out an envelope (5 mins)  |
|   | 04                            | Each student in the group takes out a picture from his small envelope and looks at it carefully before the discussion begins (2 mins)  |
| 3 | 05                            | Tape transcript (27 mins)  |
|   | LLQ                           | 0001S1: What can you see in your picture?  |
|   | GIC FR GIC                    | 0002S2: In my picture I can see the houses , a car, a bicycle, the people and others .I can see mmm- for houses it is big houses and at one ouse - there was man and woman standing outside the house and - /..5../ the man who ride the bicycle and the car (.....) |
|   | ACK                           | 0003S1: OK   |
|   | NO LLQ                        | 0004S2: yes Chairman Mr. Ngwenya let me ask you what can you see on your picture?  |
|   | GIC                           | 0005S1: in - on my picture I can see a man coming out from a car looking through the man   |
|   | GIF                           | 0006S3: [ looking at through - looking at ]  |
|   | EVACK<br>RP(W)                | 0006aS1: [ yes - OK looking through the man who ] is riding three boxes  |
|   | RCF                           | 0007S3: riding three boxes or riding something - on which there are three boxes (with a rising intonation)   |
|   | EV GIC                        | 0008S1: no- of course there are three boxes - maybe  |
|   | RP(GIC)<br>GIC RP(GIC)<br>ROC | 0009S3: so you have sa- you have said that you can see a man riding three boxes eeh (with a rising intonation)   |
|   | EV                            | 0010S1: yes  |
|   | HLQ                           | 0011S3: how? - how you know how ( with a rising intonation)  |
|   | GIC                           | 0012S1: [ I can ]  |
|   | ROC                           | 0012aS3: [ how a man can ride three boxes or in which means is riding or carrying (with a rising intonation)   |

SP RP (GIC) SP 0013S1: maybe the boxes were on the bicycle - then the bicycle when - then the bicycle maybe - has - fell down and three boxes were dropped from the bicycle

GIC 0014S1: [the man is trying to pick up these boxes ]

FR RCC 0014aS3: [ ah so the man is carrying (.....) ]

FR ACK LLQ RAC 0015S3: aah OK /.../ what else in the picture I see(with a rising intonation) /..5../ we just discuss the sequence one after another (laughing and looking at others who want to talk) - is it - isn't it Mr. /?/

ACK 0016S4: yaah

GIC 0017S1: [ also also - I can see a man standing in front of the big houses ]

FR SP 0017aS3: [ aha maybe - he think that if he is surprising from the (.....) he has got a surprise eeh ? ]

FR GIC 0018S1:L yes he has got a surprise

::Q 0019S3: what else?

SP 0020S1: maybe all

EV 0021S5: [ *sivyo* ] Kiswahii for 'not at all'

EV FR GOC APL 0021aS3: [no in my picture eeh I have taken yourturn - chairmanship ] (laughs) from now do you accept the that I may continue your responsibility to - to carry out or to control this I mean - to chair or to be a chairman of this meeting ?

ACK LLQ 0022S5; OK - let me ask my fellow there - what do you see Mr. Mohamed in your picture?

GIC RP (W) RP(GIC) 0023S6: This is a picture with a car the car is - is the between a man one man - this car is taking this - my box and this man a - come back with this my car and this down- this is a - and this is a three box

RCC 0024S5: three box eeh (with a rising intonation)

EV 0025S6: yes

RCC 0026S3: and what Mr. Ngwenya you have said that you also have three box on your picture?

EV 0027S6: yes there Mr.

ACK DIN 0028S3: OK go on Mr. Mohamed

LLQ 0029S6: What can you say answer on your picture?

FR RP(FR) 0030S5: eeh - eeh this man has a /baiko/



ACK NO LLQ	0031S5:	OK what about Mr. Kajenje what can you see on your picture?
EV GIC RP(GIC) FR RP (W) RP (W) GIC RP(GIC)	0032S3:	Thank you Mr. Ngwenya on my picture I can see - eeh four peoples- four peoples eeh one carrying or is standing aside beside his bicycle - and another one is looking - at the man who have who has a bicycle - and those other two men- are traffic police - are traffic police- are police and are looking at those men - I mean the one with a bicyl and the one who is looking at the man who has a bicycle - I don't know
SP	0033S1:	[maybe maybe he has been happened something there]
FR SP GIC RS SP	0033aS3:	[eeh - (he coughs) he is asking maybe ] he is asking about something because the bicycle is not in good order it seems that it has - it has a bend ring - maybe that man has got an accident /.../ so the man is - maybe asking what is wrong with your bicycle ?
ACK	0034S5:	OK
LLQ	0035Sx:	what are (....)
GIC NO LLQ	0036S3:	That's all I can see in my picture mybe Mr. Malinda can you [ tell us what ]
CPL LLQ	0036aS5:	[ can you tell us what is on your picture?]
GIC	0037S2:	In my picture I two men car and one house - but this house - is open - the door /.../ and also (....)
LLQ	0038S3:	how many house (with a rising intonation)
GIC	0039S2:	only one
ROC	0040S3:	only one house(with a rising intonation)
EV	0041S2:	yes - and I also see - one bicycle
ROC	0042S3:	only bicycle eeh (with a rising intonation)
EV	0043S2:	[ yes ]
ACK	0043aS3:	[ aah ]
GIC	0044S2:	[ and this car ] is stand in front of this house
ACK	0044aS3:	[aah ] (with a rising intonation)
EV	0045S2:	yes
LLQ	0046S5:	I think that there how many men are there ?
GIC	0047S2;	four
ROC	0048S5:	four men (with a rising intonation)

EV	0049S2:	yes
HLQ	0050S5:	what do you think - they are doing there ?
SP	0051S2:	I think that /..8../ four two - two man two men
ROC	0052S3:	[ two men ]
GIC	0052aS2:	[ is stand in front on in our bicycle ]
ROC	0053S3:	in two men two men are standing in front of the bicycle aah (with a rising intonation)
EV	0054S2:	yes
LLQ	0055S3:	and what about others those two others
RP(Q)	0056S2:	about others (with a rising intonation)
EV	0057S3:	yes
GIC SP	0058S2:	others one man - I think /.../ I th ink is you write
EV	0059S3:	yes
GIC	0060S2:	[ is writing in something eeh (with a rising intonation)]
RP GIC	0060aS5:	[ is writing something ]
GIC	0061S2:	but I don't know you write
LLQ	0062S3:	what is write eeh (with a rising intonation)
ACK HLQ	0063Sy:	OK what do you think may be they are polices or a doctor who are riding - what they looks like this is a polices?
ROC	0064S3:	oh police eeh ?
EV	0065S5:	yes
RP(W) FR RAC LLQ	0066S3:	policeman - oh let us switch on to Mr.Magasta - Mr. Magasta can you tell us what - is in your picture?
GIC	0067S4:	In my picture I can see that there are two officers and two men and a bicycle and [ that /?/ ]
APL DIN GIC	0067aS2:	[ let me interrupt you ] speak aloud speaK aloud - I don't hear what you ask (he laughs)
GIC RP(GIC) RSGIC	0068S4:	about my picture I can see that there are two houses and that the two houses there aare are a one man - at the front of the two house I can see that there are one man - who riding a bicycle but - he got to have accident because I see that the bicycle go to crushing a boxes /?/ he jumped [ over ]

GIC 0068aS5: [ he jumped off his bicycle ]

GIC 0069S4: he jumped over his bicycle and he got to throw  
 RP(GIC) down - also there are - the one box - boxes box it's  
 RP(W) then then they - d on't stretch upside upside down  
 GIC so you can see them the bicycle they - they are  
 going on accident

GIC 0070S3: it has go an accident

GIC 0071S4: that's general

EV 0072S5: I think that's all - let us compare all our pictures

ACK RAC 0073S3: maybe let me interrupt you Mr.Mtatiro have you  
 something to talk because you have been keeping  
 quiet for a long time

APL NO 0074S6: yaah

ACK 0075S3: you can use this chance

NO 0076S6: yaa when I listen to those picture which you have  
 explained

FR GIC 0077S3: [yaah ]

ACK GIC 0077aS6: [ I see that ] at my picture / dharaa / a car which carry  
 CPL RP(GIC) three boxes and I think Mr.Ngwenya you say that at  
 SP your picture you see the man who took the boxes I  
 think that - is his boxes

EV 0078S5: yes

SP RS 0079S4: I think I think you are wrong because i think that -  
 these boxes (S3 and S4 laugh together) is the box  
 of the driver drive the (.....)

CPL 0080S3: [ car ]

RP(W) SP 0080aS4: [ car ] and these boxes i think that when she is going  
 that box drops

CPL 0081S3: drop down

RP(W) GIC 0081aS4: [ down ] and this man come come back to that - car  
 FR GIC oh see that the box is down

ACK 0082S3: [ yaah ]

GIC SP 0082aS4: [ and ] he stops his bicycle and come to the boxes  
 ACK GIC RS and took them and I think - you see that at your  
 picture - the driver stop- stop his car - OK Ok I have  
 explained so like this because - I that is all I have  
 seen because there are is a man near that three  
 boxes [ but] the car is beside that boxes

EV 0082bS3: [ yaah ] mmh

GIC RS	0083S4:	near that box there is a man who is picking up his bicycle that's why I explained like that yaah
NO GIC	0084S3:	Mr. Ngwenya I think that time is going on very fast eeh (with a rising intonation)
ACK	0085S5:	OK
RAC	0086S3:	It's better if we compare our two - I mean no if we compare our picture and get a full story about what they - they tells about it yaah ( with a rising intonation)
ACK	0087S4:	yaah
RAC	0088S3:	so let us compare and then we will have a full story which enable us to understand the full [ events ]
CPL	0088aS4:	[events]
RP (W)	0088aS3:	[ events ] now
GIC	0089S5:	according to these pictures we have to arrange from one another according to the actions taking place [ there]
ACK RAC	0089aS3:	[ OK ] so let me stand because I don't see well (he stands up and takes part in the arrangement of pictures)
GIC	0090S6:	I will send the pictures (he passes on the pictures to group members who talk quietly to one another before the group chairman restarts)
LLQ	0091S5:	What can be the first action there?
FR GIC	0092S3:	Well wait- very difficult eeh (he laughs together with S4 as they try to make out some meaning from the pictures)
ACK	0093S6:	[ oh ]
SP	0093aS3:	[ I think ]
GIC	0094S6:	the first action I think is this picture
SP	0095S5:	[ maybe this is the first ]
RP (GIC)	0095aS3:	[ maybe the first ]
SP	0095bS6:	[ I think ]
FR SP	0096S3:	secondly - eh - this one - this one maybe - the second eeh?
EV	0097S6:	yes
GIC	0098S5:	the first one the car is moving with the boxes and

CPL 0098aS3: [ behind ]  
 GIC 0098bS5: [ the second one ]  
 RP(GIC) 0099S6: [ the second one ]  
 CPL 0099aS3: [ is ]  
 GIC 0099bS5: [ the car dropped ]  
 GIC 0099cS3: I mean those [ boxes ]  
 C[; 0099dS5: [ boxes ]  
 GIC 0100S3: dropped off the car and unfortunately this man eeh  
 coming behind the car collided with the boxes  
 CPL 0101S6: [ is ](with a rising intonation)  
 GIC 0101aS3: [ there is ] a crash  
 SP 0102S3: [maybe the bicycle had no eeh ]  
 EV GIC 0102aS5: [ the yes - the bicycle crashed the boxes ]  
 GIF 0102bS3: [ brake ]  
 RP (W) 0102cS5: [ brake ] (both S4, S5 and S6 laugh )- [ what can be ]  
 LLQ the third action?  
 ACK 0102dS3: [ yaah ]  
 GIC 0102eS4: [ thirdly ]  
 SP 0103S6: I think it is on this (.....)  
 SP 0104S3: third picture maybe  
 ROC 0105S6: [ or this ]  
 SP 0105aS3: [ maybe this ]  
 SP 0105bS4: [ this or this ] I think it is this  
 ROC 0106S3: this one (with a rising intonation)  
 ACK 0107S4: yaah  
 GIC 0108S5: [ after he has got out ]  
 RP(GIC) 0109aS6: [ he got out ] into his car  
 ROC 0109bS3: [aah ](expressing surprise)  
 ACK 0109cS5: [ yaah ]  
 GIC 0110S6: and this is coming to see

SP RCC 0111S3: the driver I think is the one who has a cap on his head eeh?

ACK 0112S5: [ yaah ]

FR GIC 0112aS6: [ eeh ] (with a rising intonation, apparently expressing some doubts )- and thirdly this is the fourth one

RAC 0113S3: [so let us arrange according to the order ]

GIC 0113aS5: [ we haven't explained how this happen ]

ACK 0114S6: oh (he laughs)

GIC 0115S5: this third one

SP 0116S3: the third one eeh (with a rising intonation) I think [ after ] this driver of the car has seen something behind him

RCC 0117S4: [ what ] (with a rising intonation)

RCC 0117aS3: [ so ]

RC 0117bS5: [ so ]

RCC 0118S3: he has got out in order to see and I think to carry his boxes eeh ? (with a rising intonation)

ACKCC 0119S4: [ yaah ] and to see the man

EV 0119aS5: [ yes ]

RAC 0120S3: so let us arrange well in this third [ one ]

CC 0120aS6: [ eh ] the fourth one

SP 0121S5: I think this one is the fourth one

RCC 0122S3: the [ fourth one ] eh? (with a rising intonation)

RS 0122aS6: [ because you see the driver ] coming to the (.....)

CPL 0123S3: coming out of the sky

ACK 0124S4: yaah

LLQ 0125S5: and what about this man (with a rising intonation)

RP(W) 0126S6: [ this man ]

SP 0126aaSz: [ this man ] I think he is remaining

GIC 0127S6: his bicycle

FR GIC 0128S3: eeh apart from

CPL 0129S6: that box

E GIC 0130S3: I mean beside those boxes and unfortunately the ring of the front tyre has bent

ACK 0131S5: OK

GIC 0132S3: let this be the [ fourth one ]

RP (W) 0132aS6: [ fourth one ]

HLQ DIN 0133S3: so what do you Mr. Ngwenya think will be the fifth one among those two pictures? Make sure Mr. Mtatiro you don't disturb this picture

ACK SP 0134S6: yaah (he laughs together with S3) I think this one can [ take ] the fifth one

RP (W) 0134aS3: [ can be ]

ACK 0135S4: mhh

GIC RP(GIC) 0136S6: two traffic two traffic police

ACK 0137S4: mhh

RP (W) 0138S3: two traffic police

RP (W) 0139S4: two traffic (.....)

RP (W) 0140S6: two traffic polices policeman

GIC RS 0141Sq: has something about that accident so they came there (S3 and S4 murmur something to each other) and talk to the and try to ask what happened there to the man who was drive - riding a bicycle and driver

RCC 0142S3: of the car eeh (with a rising intonation)

ACK 0143Sr: of the car yes

HLQ 0144S3: so what do you mean - you mean this one maybe this maybe(.....)

SP RP(W) 0145St: this one maybe- this one maybe the last one

RCC 0146S3: the first one or the last one? (with a rising intonation)

SP 0147S6: this one maybe the last one I think this is (.....)

GIC 0148Su: because after they explain what happen there

ACK 0149S3: mhh (with a rising intonation)

GIC 0150S6: they all together/..6../ (.....)

ACK 0151S3: eeh (with a rising intonation)

CPL GIC	0152S6:	walking - I think to the police station there this one? (with a rising intonation)
EV GIC	0153Sv:	yes - after they have been explained
SP	0154S9:	I think this is not the police station this
RS	0155Sw:	this is the last because there you can see that the man who drop a bicycle
EV GIC	0156S6:	eeh and this was the driver and the policeman come and see the two were discussing
E	0157S3:	were around the scene
EVE	0158S3:	yaah and the policeman came
RS	0159Sa:	and the policeman came because <i>labda</i> (Kiswahili for 'perhaps') we can say that -eeh the policeman see the accident when it take place so he came to (.....)
CPL	0160S3:	[ to ask what was wrong ]
ACK GIC RP(GIC) GIC FR RS	0160aS6:	[ yaah and what is the cause what was the cause of the accident ] and the policeman was judge and see the accident when it take place yaah - so he came to ask
GIC	0161S4:	[what was there ] they are writing about the accident
LLQ	0161a S6:	[ what was the cause? ]
GIC	0162S5:	so far that matter this [ maybe the ] last one
CPL	0162 aS6:	[ the last one ]
ACK	0163S5:	I am agree with you
EV	0164S3:	yes very nice
RAC	0165S5:	so let us (.....)
FR GIC	0166S3:	yaah very lucky because we have taken my short time to arrange the pictures (S3 and S4 laugh) -so by the arrangement the full story we can say that /.../ eh there are - a driver driving his car - in his car he was carrying - some boxes
ACK	0167S6:	[mhh ]
GIC	0167aS3:	[ we ] don't know how many because are not shown clearly
EV	0168S4:	[ yes ]
RP (W)	0168aS3:	[ shown clearly ] (with a rising intonatiion)



GIC RP(W) 0169S4: when he was driving his car - behind the car there was a a man driving a bicycle

EV 0170S5: yes

SP 0171S3: I think they all were in high speed - I mean high speed

SP 0172S6: maybe

SP 0173S3: may or maybe the road has corrugated hung corrugations (laughter)

EV 0174S6: yes (with a rising intonation)

RS 0175Sb: there are a corner because you see that there are

RCC 0176S3: a corner eeh (with a rising intonation)

GIC RP(GIC) GIC 0177S5: there is a corner in front of (....) there was a corner so at that corner - few boxes I mean three boxes

RP(W) 0178S6: when - when the car turned the corner

GIC 0179S3: three - three boxes got off the car

ACK 0180S5: OK

GIC 0181S3: unfortunately that man who was driving his bicycle eeh collided - with those three [boxes]

CPL 0181aS6: [boxes]

FR SP GIC RP(GIC) 0182S3: and indeed I think he was aah in high speed so it seemed that he fell - he fall down - he fell off the bicycle -after the crash and

ACK 0183S5: /..5../ mhh

GIC 0184S3: and the third picture it is shown that

LLQ 0185S5: you have been have you already explained about this?

EV 0186S3: yes the second one

RP(W) 0187S4: [ the second one ]

GIC 0187aS3: [ is explains ] is shown is shown that the man behind the car I mean that car collide with those three boxes

ACK 0188S5: OK

FR GIC RP(GIC) SP FR 0189S3: and he - fell down fell down so it was a bad accident in fact - maybe he he got some problems due to the accident eeh that is eeh second picture

EV 0190S5: yes

GIC	0191S3:	on the third picture it is shown that the man with the car has seen the action I mean the accident and he is coming out of his car - looking back at the man who has collided with the - boxes
EV	0192S5:	yes
GIC	0193S3:	at the same time the man is is doing what I mean is (.....)
CPL	0194S5:	is picking up his bicycle
RP(GIC)	0195S3:	is picking up his bicycle unfortunately eeh - in the fourth fourth picture - the bicycle is shown that it has (.....)
CPL	0196S4:	it has got an accident
RP(GIC) GIC	0197S3:	it has damaged you know the front ring of the bicycle has a bend(the last word is uttered with a rising intonation)
EV	0198S5:	that correct
REV	0199S3:	that correct eeh (with a rising intonation)
EV	0200S5:	yes
ROC	0201S3:	at the same time the driver is coming back to the man with a bicycle eeh? (with a rising intonation)
ACK	0202S5:	OK
FR GIC RP(GIC)	0203S3:	that is eeh this is picture number five wen this action was going on where around the scene I mean around the area where the accident took place there was some (.....)
CPL	0204S4:	/...5../ [ policeman ]
RP(W) GIC RP(GIC)	0205aS3:	[ policemen ] you can see two traffic police are coming around are walking around and it seem that they are going to see - aah [ those two men the owner of the bicycle and ]
CPL	0206aSe:	[ the driver of the car ]
GIC SP HLQ	0207S3:	and it seem that are discussing something are talking about the- the accident I think - maybe the driver of the car is / apologizing / or is saying something to the owner of the bicycle eeh (with a rising intonation)
EV	0208S4:	yes
GIC SP RP(W)	0209S3:	after that picture number six I think those policemen- policemen -policemen are writing about the cause of the accident and how it took place

EV	0210Sf:	yes
GIC SP	0211S3:	how it happened mmh -and one is leading cars - is leading cars in order to -to avoid
RP(W)	0212S6:	to avoid
CPL GIC RCC	0213S3:	to avoid more accidents while another one is writing or taking some explanations about what had happened /../ isn't it?
ACK	0214Sg:	yes
GIC RP(W) RP(W)	0215S3:	and the driver of the car is explaining - is explaining of what about what happened eeh to the poli to the traffic police while the traffic police is writing - is taking some documents
EV	0216Sh:	yes full statements about that accident
FR SP	0217S3:	aah (he laughs) I think it is somehow a very interesting story
GIC	0218Sh:	so we can say that the driver is trying to explain very very very
CPL RS	0219S6:	nicely yaa (he laughs)because he [ apologized ] to the policemen
LLQ NO	0220aS3:	[ so for your for your ] for your comments Mr. Ngwenya
ACK	0221S4:	yes
GIC RS	0222S3:	you can judge who was wrong and who in fact caused the accident I can judge that the man who was riding a bicycle yaah
RP(GIC)	0223S6:	is wrong
RP(GIC)	0224S3:	is wrong eeh (with a rising intonation)
RS	0225S6:	because it his duty to prepare his bicycle brake
ACK	0226S3:	aah
RS	0227S6:	I think was riding without a brake that's why he [ collided ] collided with the three boxes

RP(W) APL 0228S3: [ collided ] very sorry eeh that's your comment eeh  
RCC GIC RS (with a rising intonation) you have said that the one  
with a bicycle is wrong eeh (with a rising intonation)  
yes YOU have said that the one who caused the  
accident but for my comment I think all of them are  
guilty you know - because if you if you are riding or  
you are riding something a car or a bicycle - these  
things must be in good condition eeh - in order to  
avoid some accident - and if or when you are  
carrying some luggage or something eh in your car  
you have suppose this man for example he has to  
tie them these boxes

ACK 0229S6: yaah

GIC 0230S3: he has to tie them properly so when he turn or when  
RS he is riding /..5../ when he is riding eh -those boxes  
would wouldn't develop his car if they were tied

ACK 0231S5: OK

GIC SP 0232S3: so he is wrong he just put on without minding eeh  
RP(GIC) what will happen so they are wrong even this with a  
bicycle you know to use roads or road circuit routes  
RS need more attention the one must be careful and  
must be aware - so that to avoid some accidents you  
know this cause many disadvantage or or lives and  
things - so many things are damaged due to the  
carelessness of some people eh - so we must be  
careful when we we drive when we use roads that's  
all

LLQ 0233S5: for the purpose you mean that all of them caused  
that accident (with a rising intonation)

EV GIC 0234S3: yaah they are guilty - I mean they are guilty all of  
PR them must be fined (he laughs together with S6)  
they must pay something in order to (.....)

GIC 0235S6: I think that is all because the time is over

GIC 0236S4: [ I think that I think that the time is over ]

GIC 0236aS5: [ I think that is all because the time is over ]

ACK 0237S6: yaah

ACK RACE EV 0238S3: OK let us end up - thank you Mr. Ngwenya, Mr.  
NO Mtatiro, Mr. Malinga, Mr. Magasta and [Mr. Mohamed]  
let me end up

EV 0238aS6: [ and thanks to you ]

EV 0238bS5: [ thank you all my friends ]

EV 0238cS6: [ thank you ]

ACK 0238dS3: [ OK ]

- |   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| 4 | 06 | The teacher tells each member of the group to go back to his desk so that he can write the composition. The teacher hands out writing sheets and students begin writing. (This group was allowed to write after the lesson under the teacher's supervision) |
| 5 | 07 | The teacher collects the written compositions (5 mins)  |
|   | 08 | The teacher dismisses the class (0.2 mins)  |

## Appendix S1

### Student Questionnaire (English)

The following are questions about how often certain things or actions related to composition writing occur. Indicate your choice by circling the appropriate alternative for each as follows:

Very often = 5  
Often = 4  
Sometimes = 3  
Rarely = 2  
Never = 1

		Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	Do you have a class discussion with your teacher before each student writes a composition on his own?	5	4	3	2	1
2	Are you allowed by your teacher to write a composition of your own choice?	5	4	3	2	1
3	Does your teacher write on the blackboard useful expressions that can be used in the composition before you begin to write?	5	4	3	2	1
4	Does your teacher help shy students to talk?	5	4	3	2	1
5	How often do you work together with other students as a group in English lessons?	5	4	3	2	1
	*If you never work as a group (1 = Never) please go to questions 21-29					
6	Do you discuss a composition in a group before each student does it?	5	4	3	2	1
7	Do you write a single/joint composition as a pair or group with your classmate(s)	5	4	3	2	1
8	We discuss words and expressions to be used in the composition before each writes his own composition	5	4	3	2	1

10	We find it easy to discuss a composition if it makes us use the tenses we have learned	5	4	3	2	1
11	If the topic of the composition is easy we are able to provide words with which to express our ideas	5	4	3	2	1
12	We use Kiswahili (the national language) for words which we cannot express in English	5	4	3	2	1
13	While we are discussing a composition, some of us propose points for the composition while others select words and expressions to be used	5	4	3	2	1
14	When I am writing to describe something, I first think of words to use to describe it clearly.	5	4	3	2	1
15	When we are writing to describe something, each member of the group explains first what he sees	5	4	3	2	1
16	As I am writing my composition, I add details that I may have overlooked in the discussion	5	4	3	2	1
17	I can remember all the points discussed in a group when I am writing my composition	5	4	3	2	1
18	Members of the group decide on the order of ideas to include in their composition before each starts to write	5	4	3	2	1
19	Members of a group repeat points raised in the discussion before each writes on his own.	5	4	3	2	1
20	We pay little attention to the order of ideas when describing a place or something (e.g. a picture)	5	4	3	2	1

The following are statements about the compositions you write in the classroom. Please circle the number that stands for your choice, to show whether you strongly agree (=5), agree (=4), are uncertain (=3), disagree (=2) or strongly disagree (=1)

		Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
21	It is the lack of language, not the lack of ideas that makes me fail to write good composition	5	4	3	2	1
22	When I am writing to describe something I can learn some new words	5	4	3	2	1
23	When I am writing to explain what happened, I tend to ask the teacher fewer questions than when I fill in words in blank spaces in a paragraph	5	4	3	2	1
24	I learn to use the words I have learned more in a free composition than when I fill in words in blank spaces in a paragraph	5	4	3	2	1
25	Writing to express personal feelings or experiences is difficult	5	4	3	2	1
26	I find it easy to describe a process or an experiment	5	4	3	2	1
27	Writing to provide an argument, to convince or to persuade is difficult	5	4	3	2	1
28	It is easy to write giving facts or explanations about something e.g. marriage traditions in my district	5	4	3	2	1
29	Writing to correspond with others (letters, minutes, memorandum, reports etc.) is difficult	5	4	3	2	1
30	We spend more time discussing a topic we all know about than one which only a few know about	5	4	3	2	1
31	We have longer discussions when we are describing something than when we are telling a story	5	4	3	2	1
32	Discussions that last a long time make us improve in expressing ourselves	5	4	3	2	1
33	If you know only a little English, all types of compositions will be difficult to discuss	5	4	3	2	1



## Appendix S2

### Student Questionnaire (Kiswahili) (MASWALI YA UTAFITI KWAJILI YA WANAFUNZI)

Yafuatayo ni maswali kuhusu mambo au vitendo vinavyohusiana na uandishi wa insha. Chagua jibu lililo sahihi kutokana na maoni yako kwa kuzungushia nambari iliyo badala ya maelezo ya jibu lako.

Mara nyingi sana = 5

Mara nyingi = 4

Wakati mwingine = 3

Mara chache = 2

Haitokei = 1

		Mara nyingi sana	Mara nyingi	Wakati mwingine	Mara chache	Haitokei
1	Jee, huwa mnajadiliana na mwalimu kuhusu insha ya Kiingereza kabla ya kuandika?	5	4	3	2	1
2	Jee, mwalimu huwa anakuruhusu kuandika insha yoyote unayofikiria?	5	4	3	2	1
3	Jee, mwalimu huwa anaandika ubaoni maneno muhimu ya kutumia unapoandika insha?	5	4	3	2	1
4	Jee, mwalimu huwasaidia walio na aibu kuongea?	5	4	3	2	1

5	Ni mara ngapi hutokea	ukashiriki kufanya mazoezi	5	4	3	2	1
	katika kikundi cha	majadiliano darasani					

# KIKUNDI CHA

\* IKIWA HUSHIRIKI KATIKA MAJADILIANO, YAANI, HAITOKEI, TAFADHALI JIBU MASWALI 21-29.

## RUKA MASWALI 6-20, NA

6	Jee, huwa unajadiliana na wenzako katika kikundi kabla hujaandika insha yako mwenyewe?	5	4	3	2	1
7	Jee, huwa mnaandika insha moja kwa ajili ya kikundi kizima?	5	4	3	2	1
8	Huwa tunajadiliana maneno ya kutumia katika insha kabla sijaandika insha yangu.	5	4	3	2	1
9	Inaniwia rahisi kusahihisha niliyoandika nikitumia maneno yatokanayo na mjadala wa kikundi.	5	4	3	2	1
10	Inakuwa rahisi kujadiliana insha ikiwa tumetumia nyakati za vitendo (tenses) tulizojifunza	5	4	3	2	1
11	Ikiwa mada ya insha ni rahisi, inatuwia rahisi kupata maneno ya kujieleza	5	4	3	2	1
12	Huwa tunatumia Kiswahili tukishindwa kujieleza kwa Kiingereza	5	4	3	2	1
13	Tunapojadiliana, wengine huchanga mawazo wakati wengine wanachagua maneno ya kutumia	5	4	3	2	1
14	Ninapoandika insha kuhusu kuelezea kitu, huwa nafikiria kwanza maneno sahihi ya kutumia	5	4	3	2	1
15	Kila mwana kikundi hueleza kwanza anavyoona kabla ya kujadiliana kuhusu kitu kilivyo	5	4	3	2	1
16	Ninapoandika insha, huwa ninaongezea mambo muhimu tuliyosahau kujadiliana	5	4	3	2	1

18	Kabla kila huyo hajaandika, wanakikundi hujadiliana kwanza jinsi ya kuyapanga mawazo	5	4	3	2	1
19	Wanakikundi hurudia tena mawazo yaliyotolewa kwenye kikundi kabla ya kila huyo kuanza kuandika insha yake	5	4	3	2	1
20	Tunapojadiliana kuhusu kueleza mahali palivyo au kitu, hatutilii maanani mpangilio wa mawazo	5	4	3	2	1

Yafuatayo ni maelezo kuhusu insha unazoandika darasani. Tafadhali, zungushia nambari iliyo badala ya maelezo ya jibu lako ili uonyeshe ikiwa Unakubali kabisa, (=5), Unakubali (=4), Huna uhakika (=3), Hukubali (=2) au Hukubali kabisa (=1)

		Nakubali kabisa	Nakubali	Sina uhakika	Sikubali	Sikubali kabisa
21	Ni tatizo la lugha, na siyo kutofahamu mada ya insha, linaloathiri uandikaji wangu wa insha	5	4	3	2	1
22	Huwa ninajifunza maneno mapya ninapoandika insha kuelezea jambo fulani	5	4	3	2	1
23	Ninapoandika kuhusu yaliyotokea huwa ninamwuliza mwalimu maswali machache kuliko ninapojaza maneno katika nafasi za aya	5	4	3	2	1
24	Insha ya kujieleza (free composition), inaniwezesha kutumia maneno niliyojifunza	5	4	3	2	1
25	Ni vigumu kuandika kuelezea unavyojisikia	5	4	3	2	1
26	Ni rahisi kuandika kuhusu kitu fulani au jaribio la sayansi (maabara)	5	4	3	2	1
27	Ni vigumu kuandika kuunga mkono au kupinga mawazo ya mtu mwingine au kushawishi	5	4	3	2	1
28	Ni rahisi kuandika kuelezea jambo fulani k.m. Mila za arusi katika wilaya yangu	5	4	3	2	1
29	Siyo rahisi kuandika barua, taarifa ya mkutano, nyaraka za kazini au taarifa ya mwaka.	5	4	3	2	1
30	Ni rahisi kujadiliana kwa kirefu kuhusu jambo unalofahamu kuliko lilo linalojulikana na	5	4	3	2	1

- |    |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 31 | Tunaweza kujadiliana kwa kirefu kuhusu matukio yaliyotokea kuliko tunavyoelezea kuhusu kitu. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 32 | Majadiliano yanayochukua muda mrefu yanatusaidia kuongeza uwezo wa Kiingereza                | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 33 | Ikiwa hufahamu Kiingereza vyema itakuwia vigumu kujadiliana kuhusu aina mbalimbali za insha. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

## Appendix T

### Teacher Questionnaire

The following are statements regarding the teaching of compositions. Please indicate how often each of them occurs by putting a circle around the number that indicates the frequency.

		Very often/ strongly agree	Often/Agree	Sometimes/ Uncertain	Rarely/ Disagree	Never/ Strongly disagree
1	I give some topics to pupils and ask them to write on one of them	5	4	3	2	1
2	I give a topic and provide an example of how the composition should be done	5	4	3	2	1
3	I give a topic and discuss it with the class before they write about it	5	4	3	2	1
4	I let my pupils write narratives or stories	5	4	3	2	1
5	I let my pupils write descriptive compositions (to describe a character, a scene or a process)	5	4	3	2	1
6	I give my pupils argumentative compositions (writing to provide ideas in support of or against a point, writing to persuade or convince)	5	4	3	2	1
7	I give my pupils compositions that make them correspond with others e.g. letter writing, minutes of meetings, reports and memoranda	5	4	3	2	1
8	I let my pupils write expository compositions (to provide facts and explanations)	5	4	3	2	1
9	I give a topic and let students discuss it in a group before each writes about it on his own. (If you never use Group Work go to question 20)	5	4	3	2	1

10	I give my pupils models (examples) of the various compositions before they write them	5	4	3	2	1
11	Group members take turns to check what the secretary has written down	5	4	3	2	1
12	The secretary of the group reads out what he has written down to the group	5	4	3	2	1
13	Group members listen to a peer's contribution	5	4	3	2	1
14	A group member may praise or criticize another member of the group	5	4	3	2	1
15	A group member clarifies what another member of the group may have said	5	4	3	2	1
16	Group member(s) request(s) teacher's help	5	4	3	2	1
17	Group members ask the teacher to clarify the accuracy of what they have written down	5	4	3	2	1
18	Members of the group point out errors to one another	5	4	3	2	1
19	Group members who note mistakes tell the secretary to correct them immediately	5	4	3	2	1
20	One member of the group says what is to be written down	5	4	3	2	1
21	I ask a group member to explain an unclear point to me	5	4	3	2	1
22	I encourage group members to talk among themselves	5	4	3	2	1
23	I provide pupils in a group with words or expressions to be used in writing the composition	5	4	3	2	1
24	I help to clarify a point being discussed in a group	5	4	3	2	1
25	I draw the group members' attention to errors in their draft	5	4	3	2	1

26	The teacher ought to find out if in the past pupils were used (or not used) to discussions before he sets up groups for writing	5	4	3	2	1
27	Low ability students who fail to contribute in a mixed-ability group can learn better in their own low-ability group	5	4	3	2	1
28	When pupils are discussing in a group, the teacher should not question pupils but only respond to their problems	5	4	3	2	1
29	Pupils tend to sustain a discussion if what they are discussing is well known to them	5	4	3	2	1
30	Composition topics for narratives (such as writing on one's past experience) tend to engage pupils in longer discussions than descriptions	5	4	3	2	1
31	It is the lack of knowledge of the subject of the composition rather than the language needed to express it that prevents pupils from writing a good composition	5	4	3	2	1
32	The teacher's comments on the composition topic are more useful when pupils are writing than when they are discussing	5	4	3	2	1
33	The teacher ought to comment orally only on the language rather than the content(s) of the composition	5	4	3	2	1
34	Narratives (writing to tell a story, express feeling or experience) involve students in a lot of discussion	5	4	3	2	1
35	Students engage in only a little discussion when they are writing to describe a character, a scene or a process (Descriptive composition)	5	4	3	2	1
36	Argumentative writing (writing to provide ideas in support of or against something; writing to persuade or convince) makes it difficult for the pupils to engage in a discussion	5	4	3	2	1

- |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 37 | Students tend to have a lot to discuss when they are writing to correspond with others (letter writing, minutes of a meeting, memorandum, reports etc.) | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 38 | Students tend to have no points to discuss at all when writing to provide facts and explanations about something (expository writing)                   | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |



## Appendix U

### Interview Schedule for Students and Responses Given

1. Do you enjoy writing English compositions?  
 Yes: 23 (95.8%)  
 No: 01 (4.2%)
  
2. Do you ever discuss an English composition with your teacher before doing it?  
 Yes: 16 (66.7%)  
 No: 8 (23.3%)
  
3. Could you let me know if your teacher explains to you words to use in your composition before you write it?  
 Yes: 9 (37.5%)  
 No: 13 (54.2%)  
 I don't know: 2 (8.3%)
  
4. Do you find the oral expressions which the teacher uses in the classroom helpful enough for you to write a composition?  

Helpful as I use them	15 (62.5%)
Helpful only to some extent	6 (25%)
Helpful but I add my own words	1 (4.2%)
Not useful at all	2 (8.3%)
  
5. Do you understand what your friend(s) say to you in pairs/group much better than you do your teacher? Please briefly explain.  

The teacher	15 (62.5%)
My friend(s) in the group	9 (37.5%)

Reasons given:

*For the teacher:*

  - No serious work in a group
  - He expresses himself clearly
  - He is an expert
  - Group members lack vocabulary for expression

*Against the teacher and in favour of pair/group colleague*

  - I fear the teacher (1 respondent)
  - I feel free in a group/pair (1 respondent)
  - My friends can express themselves in Kiswahili if they lack the English vocabulary
  - We can ask each other questions in a group
  
6. Will you now tell me whether discussing a composition with your friends helps you to write it well?  

Helps much:	14 (58.3%)
Helps only a little:	8 (33.3%)
Doesn't help at all:	2 (8.3%)

7. Can you tell me how your friends help you to clarify point(s) in a discussion?
- |                                     |            |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| They explain meanings of new words: | 7 (29.2%)  |
| They repeat words said previously:  | 7 (29.2%)  |
| They simplify a point/idea or word  | 10 (41.6%) |
8. Can you tell me again, how elaborating a point or a word prior to writing helps you to write clearly
- Answers given:*
- Helps to provide new ideas
  - Helps to correct wrong words
  - Helps to make the language simple
- NB: most of the responses were somewhat irrelevant to the question and at times the respondents failed to provide any answer.
9. For which type of composition do you find that you lack enough vocabulary to express yourself?
- |             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| Descriptive | 9 (37.5%)  |
| Narrative   | 14 (58.3%) |
| Don't know  | 1 (4.2%)   |
10. Do you learn many new words when you are describing something (descriptive composition) or when you are telling a story (narrative)
- |                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| Describing something | 7 (29.2%)  |
| Telling a story      | 15 (62.5%) |
| Don't know           | 2 (18.3%)  |
- Main reason given:* There are many more things to talk about in a story than in a descriptive composition.
11. Do you ever request for (an) explanation(s) about a point from a group member?
- |      |            |
|------|------------|
| Yes* | 21 (87.5%) |
| No   | 3 (12.5%)  |
12. Are the explanations you get from your pair/group member about the meanings of words or about the points you need to include in your composition?
- |                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| Meanings of words | 13 (54.2%) |
| Points (ideas)    | 11 (45.8%) |
13. Do you find yourself having much to discuss when you are writing about what happened (a story) or when writing to describe something?
- |                          |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| A story                  | 14 (58.3%) |
| When writing to describe | 9 (37.5%)  |
| Don't know               | 1 (4.2%)   |

\*NB: Few students were able to give reasons for their answers. However, those who did argued that it is *easy to describe something because you see it* while others said that *a narrative is*

*difficult because you have to spend more time talking to your colleague(s) before reaching an agreement what the story is about.*

\*NB: Few students were able to give reasons for their answers. However, those who did argued that it is *easy to describe something because you see it* while others said that *a narrative is difficult because you have to spend more time talking to your colleague(s) before reaching an agreement what the story is about.*

14. Do you have much to discuss when you are in a pair with a friend or when you are in a group with other students? Why?

In pairs	7 (29.2%)
In a group	16 (66.6%)
Don't know	1 (4.2%)

*Reasons given:*

In support of working in pairs:

- It is easier to contribute a point in pair work than in a group because of the friendship that is likely to arise (or may already be existing) between the two members
- In a group it is difficult to reach a compromise as each may stick to his point of view.

In support of working in a group:

- In a group it is possible to compare points of view or notes
- In a pair your colleague may hardly have any point to contribute
- You have better views when you have many of them. These views can be found in a group rather than in pair work.

15. Which composition involves a pair member/group member repeating a point before another is able to understand?

Descriptive	17 (70.8%)
Narrative	7 (29.2%)

16. Do you ever include in your written composition the exact expressions you may have used in the discussion prior to writing?

Yes, the exact expressions	5 (20.8%)
Some of the expressions but I usually add my own	10 (41.6%)
Only some of the expressions	9 (37.5%)

\*Comments: Only 1 (one) respondent said that he consulted his friend when he failed to remember the teacher's word(s) and only 1 (one) admitted that although he recalled the words, he had to use them in a much simpler language of his. He could not state clearly how he could have access to this 'simple language'.

17. Do you discuss the story composition in the same way as you do one involving describing something?

Differently	15 (62.5%)
Same way	5 (20.8%)
Don't know	4 (16.7%)

Views given:

- In a story you just 'tell a story', you don't describe
- No difference between the two as you only need words to write a composition
- The points for writing a descriptive composition will be fewer than those for telling a story (narrative)
- It is difficult to narrate a story
- In a descriptive composition you use fewer words and fewer tenses than in a narrative
- In describing something you just write out facts but in a story you think of ideas
- In a story you discuss more because you talk about many events; so you need to know English well
- The place (setting) where the two 'take place' are different.

18. For which type of composition do you spend a lot of time planning before you write?

Descriptive	9 (37.5%)
Narrative	13 (54.2%)
Don't know	2 (8.3%)

*Comment:*

Many pointed out that the exercise involving arranging a sequence of events in a pick-up van accident, required thinking carefully about the sequence of events and then about the language to use to describe those events. Those who said the descriptive composition required much more planning pointed out that they had difficulty in searching for a word to describe properly what they were seeing.

19. Do you find yourself prevented by a fellow group member from contributing a point during a discussion?

Yes	0
No	24 (100%)

20. Can you now, finally, tell me the problems you face when writing a composition?

Vocabulary	2 (8.3%)
Tenses	17 (70.8%)
Structure (grammar)	1 (4.2%)
Spelling	2 (8.3%)
Organisation of ideas or points	2 (8.3%)

NB: Some of the respondents enumerated two or three of these but only the first one was given emphasis. The figures may, therefore, not be all that reflective of their thinking since a student could have mentioned difficulty in grammar, tenses as well as vocabulary. The *difficulty in tenses*, however, was mentioned by almost everyone.

## APPENDIX V

### Teachers' Interview Schedule and Responses

1. Would you mind telling me whether or not your pupils enjoy writing English compositions?
 

Yes, they do	3
Yes, but only a little	1
No, they don't	0
  
2. Could I know what type of compositions they write?
 

Guided compositions	3
Controlled compositions	0
Letter writing	1
  
3. Do you find it important to discuss a composition with your pupils first before they do it? Please, briefly explain.
 

Yes	4
No	0

*Comment*  
Three of the teachers said that there was no need to give them words/expressions on the blackboard, let alone discuss with them *unless* the composition topic was difficult.
  
4. Do you explain to your pupils the words they need to use when writing their composition?
 

I do	2
Yes, but rarely	1
Only if it is a guided composition	1
  
5. Are your pupils able to incorporate the expressions you use while teaching in the classroom into their written compositions?
 

A good number can	1
Only the bright ones can	3
  
6. Does the way you respond to your pupils in class affect the way they write their compositions?
 

The way I talk affects them and some are able to use my expressions in their compositions	1
Sometimes they use my expressions even though they may not be directly related to the composition topic	1
The way I repeat words and sentences to them and correct their errors affects them	1
It depends on how they understand you	1
  
7. How often are your pupils able to contribute ideas when you are teaching them how to write a composition?
 

Several times	3
Rarely	1

8. Do you let your students discuss their compositions in groups before writing them?

Yes	3
No	1

9. How often does this happen?

Frequently	1
Rarely	3

10. Do you think that pupils talking to one another in a group use a more simplified language than that of a teacher teaching the whole class?

They normally ask each other questions and provide themselves with words and meanings before seeking the teacher's help	1
They are able to support or challenge one another	1
They explain meanings of words to one another	1
They help one another by pointing out the right expressions, correcting sentences and explaining ideas	1

11. Which of these do you find effective for class discussion: pair work or group work?

Pair work	3
Group work	1

*Comment*

The teachers felt that pair work is more manageable and made pupils work more seriously and effectively than in a group.

12. Does the way pupils discuss their compositions affect their performance in composition writing? Please, explain briefly.

Yes	3
No	1

Much depends on how good a student is in English. However, pupils may discuss well but later fail to express themselves vividly in a written composition.

13. How do your pupils help one another when they are discussing compositions in pairs or groups?

They use a simplified language	1
They communicate in a language that is familiar to them	1
They clarify points by using gestures where words lack	2

14. How do group members discuss descriptive compositions on one hand and narratives on the other?

The descriptive composition takes much time to discuss but is shorter in writing. The narrative composition involves much thinking	1
--	---

- Pupils are generally good story tellers; hence the narrative does not pose problems to them. Instead, it is the *descriptive* composition that needs care 1
- The narrative involved much discussion 2
15. How do your pupils clarify points in a discussion in order to understand one another?
- They clarify in many ways including gestures if they lack words 1
- Those who often clarify tend to dominate others 2
- Don't know 1
16. For which composition do your pupils contribute a lot of ideas?
- Descriptive 1
- Narrative 3
- Comment*
- There was advanced an argument that due to vocabulary needed and the need for knowing the series of events, a narrative called for more discussion.
17. For which composition do your pupils seem to lack enough vocabulary to express themselves?
- Descriptive 3
- Narrative 1
- Comment*
- The teachers in question indicated that pupils can after all write stories, but for the descriptive compositions they needed a good grasp of vocabulary, e.g. *paddling*, *waving* (in the descriptive picture composition)
18. Which composition, do you think, involves your pupils much planning before they write it?
- Descriptive 1
- Narrative 3
19. What are the main problems affecting discussion in groups?
- Group work interferes with the teacher's scheme of work 1
- A student fails to be self-reliant as he depends on others. This is a problem as far as exams are concerned 1
- They (pupils) lack the language to express themselves 1
- Not everything discussed in a group is useful. Again, there are those who are domineering and whose views get taken for granted as being final 1
20. What are the general problems facing your pupils when they are writing?
- Vocabulary 3
- Tenses 2

Rhetorical organisation of ideas 1

(Two respondents mentioned both two points, although each of the points is discretely indicated here)



**Appendix W**  
**Sample of Field notes**  
 Form 2B, School B    16 August 1990.

### **1.Prewriting stage**

The teacher began the lesson by greeting the pupils and then pinned up the composition pictures on the blackboard (there was no notice board). He nominated pupils by pointing at them though there were two 'special' pupils whom he invariably nominated, apparently because they could answer most of the questions regarding the pictures correctly. Seemingly in line with the Class/ School rules, the pupils had to stand up while answering the questions.

The pupils hardly took down notes on what the teacher was explaining.

### **2.Discussion/ Group activity stage**

The discussions in groups began enthusiastically, with members of the group occasionally turning on the tape-recorder to listen to what they had said. Some members of the six-member groups hardly participated in the discussion and merely uttered "yes" or "no" when requested to contribute a point. The teacher hardly moved around the groups and did later only after I had kindly asked him to do so. The average time spent on discussing the pictures in each group was 8 minutes and 45 seconds and the time spent on rearranging the pictures was about 3 minutes.

Only two groups tried to write down points regarding their discussions and read them out to other group members. The rest simply arranged the pictures, discussed the sequence and broke up to go to their desks where each had to write down the story the group had discussed.

### **3.The Writing stage**

Generally, all the pupils spent quite some time thinking about what to write before they put pen to paper-despite the discussion they had had in groups.

Occasionally, they rose up and went to the group chairman's table (where the small pictures had been laid out in a sequential order) to consult the pictures. However, once the writing had commenced, most of the pupils barely wrote for more than twenty minutes. Few bothered to read what they had written down before the end of the period, and many seemed preoccupied with comparing what they had written with the written compositions of the Teacher-fronted lessons, though the two were different in their contexts. (The impact of this was later seen in some of the compositions which seemed to have been copied out from the previously done Teacher-fronted compositions). Pupils at the back of the class who had finished before the end of the period could be seen whiling away the time by reading whatever they chose before the teacher collected the compositions.

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
A/An	182	23	203	30	385	27	0.2m	44
About	5	833	18	772	23	449	1898	527
Above	5	1041	0	0	4	2067	296	3378
Accelerate	0	0	1	6173	1	0.3m	5	2m
Accident	0	0	71	87	71	146	48	0.2m
According to	2	2081	1	6173	3	3445	131	7634
Act	0	0	1	6173	1	0.3m	251	3984
Action	0	0		6173	1	0.3m	175	5714
Adult	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	36	0.3m
After	7	595	38	162	45	230	1120	893
Again	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	663	3086
Ago	0	0	1	6173	1	0.3m	271	3690
Air	0	0	1	6173	1	0.3m	295	3390
All	3	1387	13	475	16	646	2947	340
Allow	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	75	0.1m
Along	4	1041	1	6173	5	2067	250	4000
Alongside	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	19	0.5m
Already	1	4163	0	0	1	0.3m	362	2762
Also	40	104	32	193	72	143	995	1005
Always	1	4163	0	0	1	0.3m	516	1938
Am	7	595	7	882	14	1477	300	3333
Among	1	4163	3	2058	4	0.1m	313	3195
And	135	31	210	29	345	30	0.3m	36
Angry	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	42	0.2m
Another	15	277	14	441	29	356	668	1497
Answer (Verb)	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	130	7692
Any	4	1041	2	3086	6	1722	1418	705
Apart from	2	2081	1	6173	3	3445	99	0.1m
Appear	7	595	2	3086	9	1148	131	7634
Appearance	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	90	0.1m
Area	1	4163	3	2058	4	2584	283	3533
Argue	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	27	0.4m
Around	3	1388	7	882	10	0.1m	245	4082
Arrange	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	22	0.4m
Arrive	3	1388	4	1543	7	1476	41	0.2m
As	1	4163	4	1543	5	2067	7339	136
Ask	0	0	11	561	11	940	147	6803
At	21	198	52	119	73	142	6044	165
Attractive	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	60	0.2m
Average	1	42	0	0	1	0.1m	150	6667
Avoid	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	69	0.1m
Away	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	540	1852
Back	5	833	23	268	28	369	938	1066
Bad	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	155	0.4m

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
Bank	5	833	5	0	5	2067	69	0.1m
Be (_ing,_en)	2	2081	10	62	12	861	0	139
Is	257	16	70	88	327	32	0.1m	90
( Main verb )	162	26	32	193	194	53	—	—
( Auxiliary )	95	44	38	162	133	78	—	—
Are	49	85	28	220	77	13	4577	2218
( Main verb )	45	92	24	257	69	150	—	—
( Auxiliary )	4	1041	4	1543	8	1292	—	—
Was	41	101	237	26	278	0.1m	0.2m	94
( Main verb )	6	694	21	294	27	383	—	—
( Auxiliary )	6	694	36	171	42	246	—	—
Beard	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	1061	942
Because	8	520	16	386	24	431	777	520
Before	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	1061	942
Begin	5	833	2	3086	7	1476	86	0.1m
On behalf of	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	24	0.4m
Behind	10	416	33	187	43	240	292	3425
Belong	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	36	0.3m
Below	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	150	6667
Bend	0	0	17	363	17	608	15	0.6m
Beside	5	833	7	882	12	861	90	0.1m
Besides	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	42	0.2m
Better	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	412	2427
Between	9	462	2	3086	11	940	867	1153
Bicycle	0	0	171	36	171	60	10	1m
Big	49	85	3	2058	52	199	183	5464
Blackboard	2	2081	2	0	2	5168	5	2m
Boat	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	72	0.1m
Both	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	675	1481
Boy	11	378	19	325	30	344	194	5155
Box	0	0	117	53	117	88	82	0.1m
Branch	2	2081	2	3086	2	5168	58	0.2m
Brakes(Noun)	0	0	9	686	9	1148	6	1.6m
Break (Verb)	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	47	0.2m
Breakfast	3	1388	0	0	3	3445	48	0.2m
Bring	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	191	52367
Build	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	39	0.2m
Bus	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	62	0.2m
Busy	1	4163	1	0	1	0.1m	52	0.2m
But	15	277	18	343	33	313	4964	201
Buy (Verb)	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	82	0.1m
By	6	694	10	61.7	16	646	5802	172
Call	1	4263	2	3086	3	3445	161	6211
Can	19	219	13	475	32	323	2149	465
Canoe	3	1388	0	0	3	3445	1	10m

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
Car	0	0	173	36	173	60	272	3676
Careful	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	68	0.1m
Carrier	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	21	0.4m
Carry	25	166	21	294	46	225	86	0.1m
Case	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	505	1980
Catch	6	694	1	6173	7	1477	43	0.2m
Cause	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	118	8475
Certain	4	104	14	441	18	574	338	8475
Chair	3	1388	0	0	3	3445	87	0.4m
Check	0	0	14	441	14	738	58	0.2m
Child	3	1388	0	0	3	3445	245	4082
Christmas	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	72	0.1m
Climate	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	20	5m
Close	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	204	4902
Collide	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	5	2m
Come	0	160	50	123	76	136	676	1479
Complain	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	12	0.8m
Composition	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	60	0.2m
Compound	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	17	0.6m
Concerning	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	30	0.3m
Continue	0	0	7	882	7	1477	85	1765
Continuous	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	31	0.3m
Control	0	0	4	1543	4	2584	199	5025
Conversation	0	0	5	1235	5	2067	72	0.1m
Cook	52	80	4	1543	56	185	27	0.4m
Corner	1	4163	6	1029	7	1477	79	0.1m
Cover	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	92	0.1m
Crash (Verb )	0	0	7	882	7	1477	5	2m
Crash (Noun )	0	0	4	1543	4	2584	10	1m
Crime	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	44	0.2m
Criminal	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	37	0.3m
Damage	0	0	5	1235	5	2067	71	0.1m
Danger	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	92	0.1m
Dark	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	140	7143
Day	7	595	26	237	33	313	574	1742
Decide	4	1041	0	0	4	2584	70	0.1m
Describe	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	49	0.2m
Difference	4	1041	1	6173	5	2067	117	8547
Different	4	1041	3	2058	7	1476	367	2725
Dinner	1	4163	1	0	1	0.1m	95	0.1m
Direct	0	0	4	1543	4	2584	107	9346
Directly	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	70	1429
Disappear	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	18	0.5m
Discuss	0	0	6	1029	6	1723	49	0.2m
Discussion	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	80	0.1m

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
Dish	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	26	0.4m
Distance	1	4163	4	1543	5	2067	108	9259
Do	4	1041	9	686	13	795	1997	501
( Main verb )	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	—	—
( Auxiliary )	4	0	7	882	11	940	—	—
Door	14	297	8	772	22	470	337	2967
Down	2	2081	60	103	62	167	879	1138
Drive	0	0	80	77	80	129	32	0.3m
Drop	0	0	15	411	15	0.2m	50	0.2m
Due to	1	4163	3	2058	4	2584	222	4504
During	3	1388	2	3086	5	2067	497	2012
Duty	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	103	9709
Each	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	654	1529
Early	7	595	3	2058	10	0.1m	283	3533
East	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	117	8547
Eat	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	42	0.2m
End	2	2081	1	6173	3	3445	414	2415
English	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	231	4329
Enjoy	2	2081	1	6173	3	3445	58	0.2m
Equalize	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	1	10m
Escape	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	57	0.2m
Even	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	1000	1000
Evening	11	378	0	0	11	940	177	0.1m
Event	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	80	0.1m
Except	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	202	4950
Expect	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	106	9434
Explain	3	1388	3	2058	6	1723	65	0.1m
Face	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	407	2457
Fall	1	4163	62	100	63	164	123	8130
Family	5	833	0	0	5	2067	281	0.3m
Far	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	586	1706
Far away	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	3	3.3m
Fast (Adj. )	3	1388	5	1235	8	1292	38	0.3m
Feel	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	247	4049
Feet	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	223	4484
Few	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	571	1751
A few	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	—	—
Fifth	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	32	0.3m
Finally	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	166	6024
Find	4	1041	5	1235	9	1148	461	2169
Finish	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	47	0.2m
Fire	6	694	0	0	6	1723	125	8000
First	5	833	7	514	12	861	1286	778
Fish	64	60	5	1235	69	150	119	8403
Fisherman	10	416	1	6173	11	940	2	5m

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
Fishing	21	198	1	6173	22	470	22	0.4m
(Fishing)rod	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	15	0.6m
Five	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	261	3831
Fix	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	19	0.5m
Fold ( Verb )	0	0	4	1543	4	2584	13	0.7m
Follow	5	833	2	3086	7	1477	112	8929
Food	43	97	2	3086	45	230	224	4464
For	12	347	12	514	24	431	9306	107
Fore	0	0	4	1543	4	2584	3	2m
Fortunately	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	34	0.3m
Forward	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	207	4831
Four	0	0	6	0	6	1723	371	2695
Fourth	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	48	0.3m
Friend	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	163	6135
From	30	139	29	213	59	175	4693	213
Front	1	4163	8	772	9	1148	167	5988
Get	4	1041	10	617	14	738	738	1355
Get outside	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	—	—
Gift	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	41	0.2m
Give	0	0	4	1543	4	2584	447	0.2m
give out	2	2081	2	0	2	5168	—	—
Go	30	139	38	162	68	152	722	1385
Go on	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	—	—
Good	3	1388	0	0	3	3445	900	1111
Grass	7	595	0	0	7	1477	64	0.1m
Great	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	654	1529
Grow	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	47	0.2m
Guy	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	4	2.5m
Hard	1	4163	2	3086	3	3445	460	2174
Hang	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	11	0.9m
Happen	0	0	30	206	30	344	88	0.1m
Happy	6	694	0	0	6	1723	121	8264
Hat	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	55	0.2m
Have	31	134	28	220	59	175	4657	215
(Main verb)	21	198	19	325	40	258	—	—
(Auxiliary)	10	416	9	796	19	544	—	—
He	38	109	165	37	203	51	9068	110
Head	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	6	2475
Hear	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	150	6667
Heavy	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	144	6944
Help ( Verb )	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	296	3378
Her	15	277	0	0	15	689	4034	248
Here	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	732	1366
High	1	4163	1	514	8	1292	350	2857
Hill	11	378	0	0	11	940	22	0.4m

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
Him	3	1388	11	561	14	738	2265	441
Hind	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	2	5m
His	24	173	79	78	103	100	6272	159
Hit	0	0	5	1235	5	2067	57	0.2m
Home	9	462	1	6173	10	0.1m	538	1859
Hook	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	20	0.5m
Hope	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	206	4854
Hot	1	4163	1	0	1	0.1m	108	9259
House	127	33	28	220	155	67	415	2410
How	1	4163	4	1543	5	2067	876	1141
Human	1	4163	3	2058	4	2584	210	4762
Hurt	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	50	0.5m
Husband	3	1388	0	0	3	3445	134	7463
I	60	69	53	116	113	91	7620	131
If	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	2481	403
Immediately	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	106	9434
Impossible	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	129	7752
Improve	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	44	0.2m
In	62	67	51	121	113	92	0.2m	47
Inform	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	11	0.9m
Information	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	146	6849
Infront	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	—	—
Infront of	16	260	9	686	25	413	51	0.2m
In order	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	336	2976
In order to	2	2081	7	882	9	1148	107	9346
Inside	1	4163	2	3086	3	3445	130	7692
Interrupt	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	1	10m
Into	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	1658	603
Invite	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	9	1.1m
It	38	109	45	137	83	124	10503	95
Its	1	4163	6	1029	7	1477	1514	660
Job	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	193	5181
Journey	1	4163	3	2058	4	2584	63	0.1m
Judge	0	0	5	1235	5	2067	65	0.1m
judgement	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	30	0.3m
Jump	2	2081	2	3086	4	2584	25	4m
Just	2	2081	1	6173	3	3445	833	1172
Kilometre	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	3	3.3m
Kind (Noun )	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	264	3788
Kind (Adj. )	2	2081	1	6173	3	3445	31	0.3m
Knock (Noun )	0	0	11	561	11	940	6	0.8m
Know	3	1388	10	617	13	785	800	1250
Lake	15	277	0	0	15	689	41	0.2m
Last	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	870	1149
Lastly	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	5	2m



Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
Late	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	168	5952
Leader	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	70	0.1m
Lean	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	14	0.7m
Learn	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	115	8696
Leave	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	216	4630
Left	2	2081	3	2058	5	2067	512	1953
Lesson	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	26	0.4m
Let	5	833	1	6173	6	1723	316	3164
Lie ( Verb )	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	77	0.1m
Like	4	1041	0	0	4	2584	1212	825
Line (Noun )	1	1041	0	0	1	0.1m	226	4425
List	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	115	8696
Listen	0	1388	1	6173	1	0.1m	56	0.2m
Live ( Verb )	3	1388	0	0	3	3445	153	6536
Load	0	0	4	1543	4	2584	44	0.2m
Long	7	0	2	1543	9	1148	750	333
Look	1	4163	9	686	10	0.1m	413	2421
Lorry	0	0	9	686	9	1148	10	1m
( A ) lot	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	149	6711
Loudly	2	0	2	3086	2	5168	15	0.6m
Luggage	0	0	9	3086	9	1148	5	2m
Lunch	3	1388	0	0	3	3445	63	0.1m
Make	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	798	1253
Man	90	46	185	33	275	38	1072	933
Many	6	694	5	1235	11	940	1032	969
March	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	15	0.6m
Maybe	5	833	0	0	5	2067	85	0.1m
Me	4	1041	1	6173	5	2067	1560	641
Meal	4	1041	0	0	4	2584	51	0.2m
Measure(Verb)	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	28	0.3m
Meet	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	184	5435
Mile	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	34	0.3m
Minute (Noun)	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	65	0.1m
Mirror	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	33	0.3m
Mistake	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	36	0.3m
Misunderstand	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	4	2.5m
Moment	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	310	3226
Money	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	318	3145
Monkey	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	2	5m
More	1	4163	3	2057	4	2584	2182	458
Morning	12	347	0	0	12	861	233	4292
Mother	10	416	0	0	10	0.1m	275	3636
Motion	0	0	6	1029	6	1723	54	0.2m
Motorcar	0	0	4	1543	44	2584	3	3.3m
Mountain	10	416	1	6173	11	940	30	0.4m

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
Move	1	4163	17	363	18	574	116	8621
Must	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	1149	870
My	3	1388	2	3086	5	2067	1819	550
Near	12	347	22	281	34	304	207	4831
Nearby	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	29	0.3m
Nearly	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	165	6061
Neck	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	45	0.2m
Neither	1	4168	1	6173	2	5168	118	8475
Next	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	414	2415
Nice	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	92	0.1m
Night	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	373	2681
No	6	694	7	882	13	795	2408	415
Noise	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	47	0.2m
Noon	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	7	1.4m
Not	22	189	10	617	32	323	5476	183
Notebook	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	7	1.4m
Notes	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	63	0.1m
Notice	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	104	9515
Now	8	520	2	3086	10	0.1m	1495	669
Number	2	2081	7	882	9	1148	471	0.2m
Observation	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	45	0.2m
Observe	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	27	0.4m
Obtain	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	71	0.4m
Obvious	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	109	9174
Occur	0	0	12	514	12	861	65	0.1m
Of	42	99	102	60	144	72	0.4m	28
Off	0	0	5	1235	5	2067	551	1815
OK	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	2	5m
Old	7	595	3	2058	10	0.1m	652	1534
On	30	139	44	140	74	140	7033	142
Once	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	443	2257
One	125	33	94	66	219	47	3093	323
Only	13	320	3	2058	16	646	1815	551
Onto	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	15	0.6m
Open	0	0	5	1235	5	2067	266	3759
Opinion	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	128	7812
Or	6	694	2	3086	8	1292	3783	264
Other	13	320	6	1029	19	544	1535	651
Others	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	271	3690
Our	1	4163	2	3086	3	3445	1231	812
Out	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	2035	491
Out of	2	2081	4	1543	6	1723	—	—
Outside	3	1388	1	6173	4	2584	235	4255
Over	1	4163	4	1543	5	2067	1265	790
Own	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	751	1331

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
Owner	0	0	8	772	8	1292	42	0.2m
Pack	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	16	6250
Parallel	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	34	0.3m
Pass	1	4163	4	1543	5	2067	102	9804
Passage	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	59	0.2m
Path	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	46	0.2m
Pay	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	198	0.1m
People	26	160	23	268	49	211	953	1049
Perform	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	31	0.3m
Perhaps	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	407	2457
Period	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	244	4098
Permission	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	33	0.3m
Person	5	833	0	0	5	2067	180	5555
Pick up(Noun)	0	0	37	167	37	279	1	10m
Pick up( Verb)	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	25	0.4m
(A) Piece of	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	107	9346
Picture	48	87	35	176	83	124	154	6493
Place	0	0	12	514	12	861	471	2123
Play	3	1388	0	0	3	3445	196	5102
Point	1	4163	2	3086	3	3445	423	2364
Police	0	0	22	281	22	470	186	5376
Policeman	0	0	47	131	47	220	8	1.2m
Police-station	0	0	11	561	11	940	1	10m
Pot	9	462	0	0	9	1148	15	0.6m
Power	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	318	3145
Prepare	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	19	0.5m
Present	2	2081	1	6173	3	3445	437	2288
( Noun )	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	94	0.1m
( Adjective )	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	305	3279
Properly	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	46	0.2m
Pull	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	35	0.3m
Punish	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	3	3.3m
Push	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	23	0.4m
Put	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	503	1988
Put on	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	—	—
Question	0	0	5	1235	5	2067	273	3663
( Noun )	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	263	3802
( Verb )	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	10	1m
Quickly	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	149	6711
Ray	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	13	0.7m
Reach	3	1388	15	277	18	574	194	5155
Realize	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	26	0.2m
Reason	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	271	3690
Recognize	0	0	4	1543	4	2584	17	0.6m
Remove	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	37	0.3m

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
Report (Noun )	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	125	8000
Resemble	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	9	1.1m
Rest ( Verb )	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	19	0.5m
Return ( Verb)	2	2081	2	3086	4	2584	69	0.1m
Rice	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	4	2.5m
Ride	0	0	69	89	69	150	16	0.6m
Rider	0	0	8	772	8	1292	4	2.5m
Right	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	592	1675
Ring (Noun )	0	0	5	1235	5	2067	56	0.2m
Rise ( Verb )	4	1041	0	0	4	2584	49	0.2m
Rise up	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	—	—
River	37	112	0	0	37	279	83	5m
Road	6	694	44	140	50	207	172	5814
Roof	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	30	0.3m
Round ( Adj. )	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	335	2985
Run	8	520	7	882	15	689	165	6061
Sadly	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	17	0.6m
Same	1	4163	3	2058	4	2584	768	1302
Say	1	4163	3	2058	4	2584	637	1570
Save	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	72	0.1m
Scene	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	100	0.1m
Sea	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	142	7042
Second	2	2081	6	1029	8	1292	391	2557
See	25	166	56	110	51	203	820	1219
Seem	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	246	4065
Set ( Verb )	5	833	0	0	5	2067	72	0.1m
Several	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	202	4950
Shadow	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	40	0.2m
She	15	277	0	0	15	689	4090	244
Shed	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	21	0.5m
Shine	10	416	0	0	10	0.1m	5	2m
Shop	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	84	0.1m
Short	2	2081	6	1029	8	1292	228	4386
Shortly	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	50	0.2m
Should	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	1301	769
Shoulder(Noun)	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	59	0.2m
Show	1	4163	7	882	8	1292	336	2985
Side	4	1041	3	2058	7	1477	407	2457
Sight	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	98	0.1m
Sit	11	378	0	0	11	940	70	0.1m
Situation	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	172	5814
Six	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	231	4329
Sixth	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	14	0.7m
Slope	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	18	0.5m
Small	22	189	3	2058	25	413	522	1916

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
Smile	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	11	0.9m
Solution	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	149	6711
So	10	416	21	294	31	333	2414	414
Some	26	160	15	411	41	252	1852	540
Something	2	2081	6	1029	8	1292	487	2053
Sometimes	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	250	4000
Somewhere	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	52	0.2m
Son	7	595	0	0	7	1477	142	0.1m
Soon	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	264	3788
So that	1	4163	2	3086	3	3445	—	—
Source	0	0	4	1543	4	1	84	0.1m
Speed	0	0	8	772	8	1292	95	0.1m
Speedy	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	—	—
Spokes (Noun )	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	1	10m
Stand ( Verb )	0	0	9	686	9	1148	130	7692
Stand up	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	—	—
Start	4	1041	35	176	39	265	116	8621
Statement	0	0	13	475	13	795	99	0.1m
Steam	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	31	0.3m
Stick (Noun)	12	347	9	686	21	492	21	0.5m
Stick (Verb)	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	19	0.5m
Still	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	823	1215
Stir	1	4163	1	6173	1	0.1m	24	0.4m
Stool	3	1388	0	0	3	3445	7	1.4m
Stop	0	0	33	187	33	313	130	7692
Story	2	2081	3	2058	5	2067	201	4975
Street	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	82	0.1m
Such	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	1126	888
Suddenly	0	0	7	882	7	1476	174	5747
Son	28	149	3	2058	31	333	142	7042
Sunset	7	595	0	0	7	1476	6	1.6m
Sunshine	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	20	0.5m
Supermarket	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	5	2m
Surprise	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	9	0.1m
Surround	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	3	3.3m
Take	3	1388	22	281	25	413	643	1555
Take place	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	—	—
Talk	1	4163	11	561	12	861	201	4975
Teach	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	35	0.3m
Teacher	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	57	0.2m
Tell	3	1388	5	1235	8	1292	284	3521
Than	15	277	1	6173	16	646	1648	607
That	43	97	111	56	154	67	11391	88
(Determiner)	32	130	74	83	106	97	2543	393
(Demon.Pron)	3	1388	17	363	20	517	—	—

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
(Subord.Conj.)	8	520	20	309	28	369	362	2762
The	368	11	734	8	1102	9	68351	15
Their	10	416	7	882	17	608	2808	356
Them	6	694	21	294	27	329	1704	587
Then	3	1388	12	514	15	689	1546	647
There	83	50	106	58	189	55	3321	301
Therefore	0	0	5	1235	5	2067	296	378
These	5	833	0	0	5	2067	1504	665
They	31	134	39	158	70	148	3685	271
Thing	10	416	2	3086	12	861	341	932
Third	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	135	0.6m
This	40	104	21	294	61	169	5292	189
Those	1	4163	26	237	27	383	957	1045
Three	13	320	19	325	32	323	698	1433
Through	3	1388	2	3086	15	689	774	1292
Throw	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	19	0.5m
Tie ( Verb )	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	8	1.2m
Time	7	59	14	441	21	492	1658	603
Once upon a time	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	—	—
To	55	76	152	41	207	50	26781	37
Together	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	348	2874
Too	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	925	1081
Top	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	38	0.3m
Touch ( Verb )	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	19	00.5m
Tough	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	38	0.3m
Towards	12	861	15	411	27	383	318	3145
Town	0	0	9	686	9	1148	248	4032
Traditional	3	1388	0	0	3	3445	74	0.1m
Traffic	0	0	27	229	27	383	44	0.2m
Traffic man	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	—	—
Travel(Verb)	0	0	6	1029	6	1292	11	0.9m
Tree	37	112	1	6173	38	272	69	0.1m
Trot ( Verb )	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	1	10m
Try ( Verb )	0	0	10	617	10	0.1m	152	6579
Turn	0	0	6	1029	6	1292	230	4348
Two	83	50	54	114	137	75	1549	646
Tyres	0	0	24	257	24	431	2	5m
Ugly	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	26	0.4m
Under	3	1388	0	0	3	3445	646	1548
Unfold	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	2	5m
Unfortunately	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	44	0.2m
Until	4	1041	1	6173	5	2067	4787	2092
Up	3	1388	2	3086	5	2067	1861	537
Use ( Verb )	5	833	0	0	5	2067	184	5435

Word	Descriptive		Narrative		Total		Lob	
	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio	Freq.	Ratio
Usual	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	118	8475
Usually	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	239	4174
Van	0	0	7	882	7	1476	21	4762
Vehicle	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	20	0.5m
Very	14	297	18	343	32	323	1231	812
Village	21	198	0	0	21	492	123	8130
Wait	1	4163	1	6173	2	5168	82	1295
Wake (up)	1	4163	5	1235	6	1292	0.3m	0
Walk ( Verb )	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	359	2785
Want ( Verb )	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	359	22785
Wash	1	4163	0	0	0	0.1m	19	0.5m
Watch (Verb)	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	56	0.2m
Way	4	1041	3	2058	7	1476	936	1068
We	1	4163	5	1235	6	1292	3128	320
Well	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	1010	990
West	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	205	4878
What	2	2081	18	343	20	517	1925	519
Wheel	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	32	0.3m
When	5	833	60	103	65	159	2544	393
Where	2	2081	13	411	15	689	1041	961
Whether	1	4163	0	0	1	0.1m	359	2785
Which	5	833	46	134	51	203	4467	224
While	7	595	8	772	15	689	590	1695
Who	31	134	101	61	132	78	2236	4478
Whole	0	0	1	6173	1	0.1m	435	2299
Whose	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	301	3322
Why	1	4163	2	3086	3	3445	454	2203
Wide	2	2081	0	0	2	5168	148	6757
Wife	5	833	0	0	5	2067	256	3906
Will	6	694	7	882	13	795	2377	421
Window	26	160	3	2058	29	356	151	6622
With	15	277	30	206	45	230	7201	139
Without	4	1041	3	2058	7	1477	666	1501
Woman	61	68	9	686	70	148	243	4115
Wood	1	4163	2	2058	3	3445	46	0.2m
Wooden	0	0	4	1543	4	2584	34	0.3m
Word	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	317	3155
Work	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	824	1214
Worry(Verb)	0	0	2	3086	2	5168	36	2778
Write	1	4163	8	772	9	1148	101	901
Wrong	0	0	3	2058	3	3445	162	6173
You	6	694	4	1543	10	1034	4086	245
Young	4	1041	0	0	4	2584	485	2062

[illegible]



**APPENDIX X3**

**Sample of an index card used for the counting of frequency of lexical items**

Conversation

converse, converses, conversing, conversed,  
conversational

||||

THIS  
IMAGE  
HAS  
BEEN  
REDACTED  
DUE  
TO  
THIRD  
PARTY  
RIGHTS  
OR  
OTHER  
LEGAL  
ISSUES

Sample Tally Sheet for counting Cohesion ties.

THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES



THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES



THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES



- 5 - Candidate's Number .....

THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY  
RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES





THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES



THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES



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PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

